

MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER, 1919

Vol. LXVIII

NUMBER 2

Father Was Right

A COMEDY OF COMMERCE

By Henry Payson Dowst

Illustrated by Stockton Mulford

THE big building of the Bosworth Press vibrated to the thundering symphony of its great machines. Day after day, year in and year out, these hungry mills devoured their enormous meed of paper—paper of all sorts, from the cheapest “news” to the fine vellums of Japan; and day by day, year in and year out, they spewed forth that same paper, printed in many tongues, cut, collated, and bound, to carry man’s thought to man on a myriad of subjects.

Did the student of science wish to enrich his fellows with his conclusions touching the nebular hypothesis—at his own expense—let him go to Bosworth. And did he of a lesser science yearn to benefit humanity through the agency of pill, powder, or panacea, Bosworth would print for him brochures by the million, informing the aching multitudes that Papp’s Painless Potion could be found at all drug-stores.

“We print everything,” was Bosworth’s slogan, a concept amply justified in practise.

Claiming a business kinship with the cheerful Philadelphia statesman-philosopher of colonial days, Hiram Bosworth had worked his toilsome way up the steeps of success from the humble office of an uncle in a remote New Hampshire town, who published a now long-forgotten weekly, probably called the *Bugle* or the *Guardian* or the *Palladium*. Here Hiram learned to stick the sticky types, make up the meager forms, and imprint therefrom, by means of a one-boy-power press, the scant edition of the gossipy sheet.

But no country village could long check the ambitions of such as Hiram Bosworth. He migrated, and as he went he wrought. So, at the end of a quarter-century, he became the master of a great business, a veritable institution, geared to vast requirements of product and speed. Where other



HARD-WORKING, HARD-THINKING, HARD-DRIVING, HE HAD PLOWED HIS WAY TO THE FOOT OF—

printers turned out thousands of impressions, Bosworth piled upon the quaking floors of his huge plant printed sheets running into the millions.

He made money.

"Cheap jobs for cheap Johns," was Bosworth's motto. His standards were the highest, his prices equally so. The paper, the ink, the presswork of a Bosworth booklet were the best. His types were the newest, the most attractive. A Bosworth page was a thing of beauty, an artistic concept, alluring the eye by the harmony of its proportions, lending to plausibility the support of fine balance and, when appropriate, the most charming of decorations.

In the Bosworth plant every function of

the graphic art was performed in the service of Bosworth's customers. A score of artists wrought their dreams in line, wash, and color. On one floor the fiery acids and sharp tools of the engraver transferred these dreams upon metal plates, that the printing-presses might multiply their delights for the admiring eye of the public.

Paper in great cases and rolls awaited, in the Bosworth storehouse, the call of the cylinder. Snowy sheets of clay-finished "coated" paper, satin-textured; rainbow-hued stacks of cover stock; ponderous gray rolls of the humble news; toll of the pulp-forests or of Ireland's flax; coarse-fibered, thick-bulking textures of esparto-grass; sallow parchments of the Orient—all



—THE RAINBOW TO FIND THERE BUT A DUBIOUS REWARD—AN ATTACK OF NERVOUS PROSTRATION

these and many others crowded the plethoric stock-rooms.

Ben Franklin himself, inventor and seer, would have marveled at the vast, myriad-fingered presses, driven by the lightning of his own discovery, snatching the long, supple sheets from the rolls and by a kind of shrieking magic grinding them into a flooding torrent of completed books, printed, folded, trimmed, wire-stitched, ready for the reader's eye, moist and fragrant as new-baked loaves.

"This, Mr. Franklin," you could imagine Bosworth saying, as he guided his distinguished visitor from one department to another, "is our proving-room. Those hand-presses look familiar to you, I guess.

I suppose you could manage one of them pretty well; but you'd find you got a bit more pressure than the old squeezers used to give you, eh?"

And afterward Bosworth would have taken Poor Richard back to his private office, handed him a cigar, and persuaded his guest to let him figure on the next job of almanacs.

"A man with your interests can't afford to be bothered with all these details, Mr. Franklin. Of course, we charge a good price, but it's economy in the long run to have our grade of work, especially with an intelligent class of readers like yours. Some of our bright young men in the copy department would be glad to take the writing

and editing off your hands, too; in fact, I should say when they once got the hang of it all you'd need to write would be a few wheezes for fillers. Of course you'd want the job to retain your personality as much as possible; but we'd manage that. I have one chap who's a wizard at imitating O. Henry, Kipling, and Bret Harte; and another did some John Milton verses for Summerby's Seed Catalogue that were wonderful. That was a four-color job, half a million copies. Let me show you a sample."

Thus is epitomized the career and success of Hiram Bosworth, printer, up to a day five years preceding the real beginning of this story. On that day the man of big achievements collapsed in his office. Hard-working, hard-thinking, hard-driving, he had plowed his way to the foot of the rainbow to find there but a dubious reward—an attack of nervous prostration.

Philip, his son, trained under his father's eye, bundled his ailing parent aboard a steamer bound for the soft airs and shimmering waters of the tropics. Afterward, Hiram tried golf, which he found moderately soothing. He went to sanatoriums and hotels and baths. He rode horses, drove an automobile, sought the advice of the Mikes and Pats who own health-farms in Long Island and Westchester, breathed the dry airs of Colorado and Arizona, inhaled the chill vapors of Newfoundland. Gradually he won back to health, and as gradually, but even more surely, acquired a distaste for the grind of running a print-shop. He learned to play, seriously, sometimes irritably; he unlearned the tedious routine of toil.

"I guess," said Gene Stokes, factory superintendent, "the old man's quit us for keeps."

"We'll worry along," replied Leach Curdy, general manager. "He can't kick, so long as the dividend-checks keep coming."

The Bosworth Press was kept going with all the appearance of continued prosperity. There was a board of directors, which included Philip, the old man's son, who bore the entitlement of "production manager." Philip's job was to oversee what was known as creative work. He bossed the art department and the copy department, was responsible for plans and layouts, and exercised general supervision over the engraving department as well as a critical function looking to the ultimate quality of the work turned out by the house.

Also on the board were Leach Curdy, general manager; Peter Nagel, head of the sales department; Abner Dickerman, the company's attorney; Chester, of the Fourteenth Avenue Trust Company, where Bosworth had banked for a decade; and two smutty-fingered representatives of the operatives, Jerry Quinn and Ben Moore. Hiram Bosworth had always inclined to exemplify something of the cooperative idea in conducting his affairs. That was why the toilers and sweaters in the big plant were represented on the board. The "help" were permitted in a limited way to buy stock in Bosworth Press, paying for it piecemeal from their savings or their accretion of dividends.

Hiram used to say:

"By gorry, I've got a loyal bunch around me! I work 'em like the devil, pay 'em well, and treat 'em fair."

Hiram was a tyrant, benevolently despot, irascible, gruff, soft-hearted, shrewd, far-seeing, exacting, and charitable at once; a man of honor and ideals touching the integrity that had cost him his health at the comparatively young age of fifty-five or so, a man who looked his years because of his white hair and tired eyes. Up to the day of his sudden collapse, he never failed to beat the eight-o'clock bell that signaled the beginning of business; never failed to lag behind the five-thirty stroke that rang its close.

"What I ask them to do, I'm not afraid to do myself," he said.

II

DESIRE BROWN had never seen Hiram Bosworth. She went to work for Bosworth Press about two years after the head of the house had his famous sinking-spell and departed in search of his lost health.

Desire was Leach Curdy's steno—that is to say, his secretary. She had now been employed at Bosworth's for three years, and if any one knew more about the general run and requirements of the great business than Desire, it must have been Curdy himself. Curdy was an adjunct of Bosworth Press dating back a decade or more, a man of thirty-five or thereabouts, who had grown with the business and was believed by the old man to be a square peg fitting accurately into a square hole.

The girl was twenty-four years old, as pretty as—well, Desire Brown would qualify instantly for a magazine cover, or

one of those less-obtrusive pages where the cold-cream sisterhood spreads its snares. She had hair of a warm brown with glints of gold in it, and brown eyes as well, which sometimes, especially when she laughed, seemed to have caught something of the same sunshiny light. She was rather slender, but her shirt-waist fitted without coaxing.

She always had a trim and tidy look, which was partly owing to the fact that she liked nice-looking shoes and silk stockings; and, going to the other extreme for a final characterizing touch, the only thing about her which at all suggested disorder was an aggregation of shimmery little curls about her face and ears and neck which she vainly tried to subdue by means of a couple of pencils thrust into places where they were intended to serve the double purpose of restraint and convenience.

She was businesslike, interested in her work, sensible, good-humored, a steel trap for brains, efficient, brisk, but withal serene and unworried—just exactly the kind of girl you have been looking for to fill a place in your own office, if you have one.

Desire lived with her mother and two sisters somewhere north of One Hundred and Thirty-Fifth Street, and adored Douglas Fairbanks. Every Friday afternoon she drew twenty-one dollars from the cashier. The only other item of interest about Desire Brown at this stage of the story is the fact that Philip Bosworth, production manager and son of the old man, was wild about her. To say that Desire was unappreciative of the admiration thus bestowed upon her by the good-looking young printer would imply that she lacked a sense of romance, and there is no such intent. But Desire was very sensible. She was given to reflection, and a kind of prudent logic told her that something beyond mere devotion was necessary in qualifying a suitor; and Philip Bosworth was young.

True, he was very engaging. He had nice, courteous ways, and a wholesome democracy of bearing that pleased her. She felt that he was honorable, clean, earnest, and capable. She wondered if he were as shrewd as his father. She wondered if he were inclined to be easy-going, too readily swayed by the opinions or arguments of others. She believed and hoped that as he developed into a business man and executive he would learn to make quick decisions that were as correct as they were prompt. She

watched to see how he judged men and associates, to see who influenced him, what kind of arguments suited his standards—what, in fact, his standards were.

Desire saw in Philip Bosworth a youth with immense possibilities for success, by reason of the fact that he was the old man's son. She knew the business was an exacting one, highly technical, hedged about with pitfalls, made up of a multitude of factors that demanded accurate and sound judgments. A single detail could rob a job of its profit, or cause a considerable loss. So far, Philip seemed to be making good.

But Desire thought the young man deferred too much to the opinions of Leach Curdy, the general manager. Frankly, and although she had been Curdy's secretary for three years, Desire did not, could not like him. She was loyal and faithful; and Curdy always treated her with consideration—or as much consideration as he accorded any one. Curdy was cold, icy-cold. He was a merciless driver, borrowing the old man's tyranny without the old man's fairness. Desire, who did not know Bosworth, was inclined to judge the founder of the business by what she deemed he had imparted to Curdy of irritability, selfishness, and domineering importance.

Yet all these traits she would have forgiven if she had fully trusted the man. She didn't know why she had not the fullest confidence in his integrity; but something told her that Curdy had in his make-up a streak of yellow. She tried, loyally, to overcome this feeling and take him at his face value. But in three years of daily association with him she failed in this.

So, when she saw Philip Bosworth seemingly too inclined to yield to all Curdy's judgments, or even whims, she wished the younger man might show a little more backbone.

When, after she had served Bosworth's three years, the old man suddenly popped up, she soon had opportunity to learn how far her intuitions regarding Philip and the general manager had led her aright.

III

HIRAM BOSWORTH stepped out of his big, closed car and stood on the sidewalk a moment, gazing aloft at the Bosworth Building with an appraising eye. One would have thought him, at first, a perfect stranger. But Hiram was simply looking to see if there had been any change in five years.

was possessed of the full vigor of health and the one-hundred-per-cent alertness of any business man at his best.

That was why he had come back to the Bosworth Press. He was tired of the endless search for something to entertain

SHE NOW RECOGNIZED WHO AND WHAT HE WAS, AND SHE WAS PROPERLY RESPECTFUL

Apparently satisfied that the bricks and windows and cornices were about as he had left them, he moved briskly across the walk and entered the building.

Hiram was tall, bony, rather bulky. Slightly stooping, his broad shoulders expressed power. So did the large, well-shaped head. His hair was almost snow-white; but his cheeks were ruddy with health. Little wrinkles around his eyes told a story of years spent in concentrated effort, and gave his eyes a somewhat tired look; and if your judgment were a hasty one, you would have fixed his age at seventy. In reality he was ten years younger; and by reason of his five years of rest, he



him. He ate like a horse, slept well at night, and thought as clearly as ever. He felt in himself twenty years of hard, productive work. He owned a great business; why let others run away with it? After all, he knew he had never in all his life got half the fun out of anything that he got out of the commercial game. He had played it with a master-hand. In five years there might have been a few new tricks invented; if so, he wanted to know them and devise some improvements.

Hiram walked from the elevator on the top floor, which was the sixth, straight to the wicket marked "Information." A young lady looked up and inquired sweetly whom he wished to see.

After all, she couldn't know, he thought. She was a newcomer, of course. She couldn't remember him; at about the time he had left, this girl had been playing with doll-babies, or going to school in knee-length petticoats. Still, in his own factory, to be held up—

"Open the door, if you don't mind," he said. "I'm Mr. Bosworth. I guess you don't remember me."

The young lady stretched forth a hand and pressed some hidden spring, whereupon the latch of the door beside her little window clicked, permitting Hiram Bosworth to pass through. But the girl had a hesitant look, as if she were in doubt of the propriety of letting in a perfect stranger without the usual formalities.

"If you want to see Mr. Philip Bosworth," she said, "his office is the third door on the right."

"Thanks," said Hiram.

He moved off amid a multitude of desks, at each of which sat a worker. These were the clerks—accountants, billers, cost-keepers, and typists. There was a small army of them, all busy, all at this instant taking a sly peep at the bulky, loose-clothed form of Hiram Bosworth. Surprising, he thought, how few familiar faces there were in the room.

At one desk he passed, however, sat a veteran—Homer Bangs. Bangs was chief of the estimate department.

"Hello, Homer!" said Hiram. "How's the boy?"

Bangs, who was slightly rheumatic, got hastily to his feet and seized the hand of his returned employer.

"Well, well, Mr. Bosworth, I'm glad to see you! Quite a stranger, ain't you? How

long has it been—five years? Don't think we've changed much, have we? Oh, a few new faces, that's all."

Hiram passed on toward the third door at the right. Homer Bangs was all of sixty. It stung Bosworth to realize that only "the oldest inhabitant" seemed to remember him. Of course, in the fifty or more people in the room, there were others, but they were too far away to greet him. Hiram knew it would require only about a minute for every soul there to learn that the old man was back—but how many would there be asking:

"Well, who the devil is the old man, anyhow?"

Bosworth reached the third door at the right. The door was a little ajar, and he could see inside his son Philip talking with two visitors. Philip did not see him, and the old man passed on. Farther along, in the corner, was the door of the office that had been his.

Just outside this door was placed a desk, at which sat a young woman with brown hair delicately shot with streaks of gold. She was operating a typewriter, her white fingers flying among the keys with almost unbelievable speed, while the machine gave forth a *rat-tat-tat* like the roll of a woodpecker's beak against a hollow tree. This young lady looked up inquiringly, just as Hiram extended his hand toward the knob of the door.

"Did you wish to see Mr. Curdy?" she asked with cool courtesy. "Who shall I say wants to see him?"

Desire arose and advanced to the door. There was something protective in her attitude, something official. She possessed authority. Hiram's hand dropped at his side, guiltily.

"Tell him the old man's back!" he snapped.

Good Lord! A plumb stranger in his own house! Held up by every whippersnapper and made to give his pedigree! He stood aside and permitted Desire Brown to pass, noting that she was deliciously pretty.

"Got the office filled up with scatter-brains," he grumbled to himself. "She's a pert piece; acts like she was boss!"

Miss Brown returned, dimpled, and said he might go in. Her smile told Hiram that everything was all right. She now recognized who and what he was, and she was properly respectful.

"Better be," he grumbled inwardly.

Then, stepping through the door, he greeted Leach Curdy. The latter was already on his feet, advancing to meet him.

"As I live," he said. "Well, well! So you thought you'd drop in on us, eh? Phil know you're here? I guess he's got a couple of customers in with him. Sit down; have a cigar! How have things been with you? You're looking splendidly, Mr. Bosworth, splendidly!"

Now what was it in this cordiality that made Hiram Bosworth wince? He didn't so much blame Curdy for having usurped his room and his desk. Of course, the general manager would move back into other quarters now; but this genial how-do-you-doness had the wrong ring. Curdy was treating him like a visitor.

"I got restless," said Hiram, sitting down and lighting Curdy's cigar. "A man can't go on doing nothing forever; not when he hasn't a good excuse."

"I'm glad you're feeling so well," said Curdy. "Are you in the city for long?"

"Huh?"

"I say, are you staying in town for quite a while, or are you planning some new adventure?" Curdy raised his voice a trifle; the old man must have grown deaf in the last five years.

"Quite a while? Why, I'm back for good. Got enough of the butterfly life. After this, thirty-six holes of golf a week is my limit; just enough to keep me fit. I'll give you a couple of days to get things fixed up for me; I don't suppose it's fair not to give you more time, but I'm sort of impatient to get busy. I never realized before how good printers' ink smelled."

Curdy listened to this brief announcement with amazement. He had thought the old man might come back some day—that is, for the first three or even four years he had thought so; but lately he had practically dismissed the possibility. How could Bosworth hope to pick up the threads of a big business after being completely out of touch with it for five years?

"Oh, I see," he said a trifle feebly. "That's good, Mr. Bosworth. I hadn't supposed—that is, I wasn't planning—Oh, we'll have things adjusted right off. You can move in any time. I guess you'll want your old office back, won't you?"

Good Lord! He guessed! He put it in the form of a question! Where the devil did he expect the owner of the business was going to stay? Down-stairs with the jani-

tor? Hiram's irritability increased; and yet it wasn't the thing to let it show.

"Well," he said, "take your time, Leach, take your time. I'll be round in the morning, but you don't have to make yourself a lot of inconvenience. Suppose you and I share this room for a while? Then you won't have to break your neck getting out—"

"Oh, by no means," protested Curdy. "Couldn't think of it. You must have your old office, just as always."

There was a large magnanimity in his tone and manner, as if he were conferring a favor. Hiram arose.

"I'll drop in on Phil," he said. "Business pretty good, Leach?"

"M-m, yes, very good for this time of year."

Hiram pushed open Philip's office door and walked in without knocking. The two visitors had gone. Philip was poring over some layouts of a catalogue sent in to him from the estimate department for definite data, and did not at once look up. Hiram stood looking down at Phil's orderly desk, the neatly labeled pigeonholes, the fresh blue blotter, the ink-well and pens in regular array—all very businesslike and systematic. Philip was checking over some sheets and figuring type sizes on a bit of scratch-paper. He worked with an admirable precision, wasting no motions, setting down no superfluous marks. It was good to see him thus absorbed in his work, so that even the entrance of an intruder did not at once gain his attention.

Hiram sat down alongside his son's desk and said sharply:

"I'm in the market for a million eight-sheet posters in color. Mr. Curdy referred me to—"

"Father!" cried Philip. "Dad! Great Scott! What are you doing here? I thought you were in Banff!"

"Was, until last Friday. Got restless. Phil, I've changed my mind. I'm too young to retire; I'm going to get back on the treadmill."

"Good!" shouted his son. "Hooray! That's the way to talk! Can't tell how we've missed you! Always hoped you would get over that foolish idea of yours that you'd had enough. Let's get Curdy in and tell him."

"I've told him."

"Good! He's occupying your office; we'll have him out of there by noon."

Curdy's our g. m., you know. Board of directors thought he had the ability—"

"Curdy's smart. What are you doing?"

"Production manager—art and engraving, and quality of output, you know."

"Sounds all right. Guess I was always my own general manager and production manager, too. Well, high-sounding titles don't hurt anything—or help much, either. If you get the work done, that's all that's necessary. Say, who's the young lady sitting outside of Curdy's office? Kind of a reigning princess or something? She put on considerable airs."

liveried butlers or something to fetch in customers' cards."

Now Hiram knew he was harsh and unreasonable in saying these things. He had come into his own office and had been



"FATHER!"
CRIED PHILIP.
"GREAT SCOTT!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE? I
THOUGHT YOU WERE
IN BANFF!"

"That's Miss Brown, Desire Brown. She's Curdy's secretary."

"Oh, so Curdy has a secretary, has he? Girl named Desire, eh? Well, I don't desire her around me any, thanks! She's too pert."

"Why, Dad Bosworth! That girl is positively the most efficient, capable, reliable, dependable—"

"Enough, enough!" cried Hiram. "What's the matter with you boys? Got to have a broiler to do your thinking for you? Kind of a brain in petticoats? Next thing you and Curdy'll have a couple of

treated like a stranger; and this Miss Brown had as much as called him down for daring to lay hands on the door-knob of a room that had been his *sanctum sanctorum* from the first day the Bosworth Press had moved into its new building. Mentally, old Hiram mimicked Desire's ladylike tones, imparting to them an offensive, mincing quality of his own:

"Do you wish to see Mr. Curdy? Who shall I say wants to see him?"

"Well, Phil," he said, puffing at his cigar. "I'll trot along. To-morrow morning I'll be on the job; and if Curdy can get fixed

up in some other place, I'll just sit right down at my own desk and see how long it takes me to get my brain speeded up to the old Bosworth gait. 'Twon't take long, I'll tell you. Couldn't have stayed away another day and kept out of a bughouse."

Hiram arose and edged toward the door.

"I don't suppose," he said frankly, "you boys will be overmuch tickled to have me back. Curdy didn't cheer very loud, that I could notice. I suppose you've got things geared differently from what they were in my day. I'm not narrow, though; I'm not blind to improvements. I'm not too old to learn, and if you young chaps can show me anything, I'm more than glad to listen. I don't want you to feel I'm coming back to upset you."

"Forget it, dad," said Phil. "It's just adding another brain and a good one—easily the best of the lot."

Hiram went away wondering if his son meant that. Of course he didn't. It was plain enough Phil was being polite. He, Hiram, was an old-timer, who had come back from the discard to interfere with progress. He was an intruder, an interloper.

Well, it was his business. These young upstarts were there by his sufferance. And that girl! Curdy could have her, but he'd better keep her out of Hiram Bosworth's way. Hiram didn't want any lady watchdog at his threshold—not much!

He got into his car and his chauffeur, by name James Gaffney, drove him up-town to a club distinguished for its ponderous respectability. Hiram's wife and daughter called Gaffney "James," but Hiram addressed him as "Jim," and gave him cigars. Mrs. Bosworth and Mary said this was the way to spoil a good servant.

Hiram chuckled after a while, thinking of the consternation on Curdy's face on learning that the old man was coming back to take charge of things. Philip had behaved better; he, at least, had had grace enough to conceal his chagrin.

"I'll show 'em," grumbled Hiram. "I'll show 'em!"

IV

"I TELL you it's all wrong; I won't stand for it!" roared Hiram Bosworth, one afternoon something like a week following his abrupt appearance at the office. "You boys don't use sound judgment. How the devil do you figure you're making money out of such a contract?"

Hiram and his son Philip and Leach Curdy were seated in the old man's office, with Peter Nagel, head salesman, going over some orders Nagel had just brought up for acceptance. One called for a very large delivery of catalogues for a giant mercantile concern in the Middle West.

"Well," said Leach, "you've got to admit a job like this means plenty of work for all our help for some weeks, and no idle presses; so we can afford to take it at less than our standard profit—"

"No you can't!" howled Hiram. "I say you can't. What do you think we established a standard profit for? This business is run to make money. We don't want jobs we lose on. Cheap jobs for the cheap Johns, I say."

"But Mr. Bosworth, this job is profitable—a low percentage on a big volume—"

"All wrong, all wrong, I tell you, Leach. Let's see your figures. Where's your margin of safety? Whoever told Homer Bangs to figure this job without our safety percentage? And say, what does he mean by putting in this grade of stock at eight cents a pound?"

"It cost us eight cents—"

Hiram groaned. He bowed his head in his hands and rumped his thick white hair; then he made a gesture as of one vainly beating the air, a gesture expressing complete loss of confidence in human discretion.

"How much can you go out and buy it in the market for?" he demanded. "Can you buy a single pound, or ten tons of that stock for eight cents? Or eight and a half?"

"No, but we had a big jag of it in the stock-room—"

"And because you had it you wanted to go and sell it for less than it is worth. Well, you ain't a going to do it; not with my consent."

"But father," urged Philip, "the Middle States Printing Company has been after this contract for two years—and by figuring the stock at what it cost us instead of at the market, we can just beat their price and hold the business."

"Who said so?"

"Walker, the Badgley Company's purchasing-agent."

"Slickest duck in the business, Walker is. I've dealt with him for years. By gorry, he never put anything like this over on me! There's poor salesmanship here, Nagel. You let these fellows browbeat you."

"Well, you know, Mr. Bosworth," be-

gan Nagel lamely, "times are changing, and I felt we couldn't afford to lose that Badgley catalogue—"

"I suppose you figured we could afford to print it and make old Simon Badgley a present of our profit, didn't you? I suppose you got sorry for the poor man and kind of pitied him. Say, Peter, how long have we been runnin' a philanthropic institution for millionaire catalogue houses, eh? Now listen, boys! I'm just as willing to lose Badgley's business as I am to drop this blotter in the waste-basket, if I can't make money keeping it. If it's a losing contract, let the other fellow take it and do the losing. I'll shut this whole damned plant down before I'll consent to taking work at less than our standard profit. And let me add just one little thing that I happen to think of. If we do lose the Badgley job, I'm going to have some one's hide!"

The sales manager squirmed.

"If the Middle States outbids us, Mr. Bosworth—"

"Outbids hell!" roared Hiram. "Is there a printer in the country that hasn't outbid us time and again? How long since you boys have started worrying about bids? Holy cats! I thought if there was one house in the country that didn't have to figure every job against Tom, Dick, and Harry, it was this. When I left I had things fixed that way. We sold our product for higher prices because it was better. I thought I had this bunch educated to my way of thinking, but I guess you've all backslid. Poor salesmanship, I say."

He lapsed into thoughtful and sullen silence. His companions sat and looked at one another in embarrassment. They all believed the old man to be wrong. Times had changed, competition was keener, other printers had come into the market with good work at lower prices than Bosworth's.

"What are you fellows doin'? Thinkin' up alibis? Say, Philip, go get me a bunch of samples of jobs you've turned out in the last three months. Let's see what your competitors have managed to scare you into doing."

Philip went out and returned with a handful of different items of printed matter—catalogues large and small, circulars, booklets, posters.

"I guess you'll find they're pretty good, on the average," he said.

"Average," snorted Hiram. "Average! Since when has Bosworth's been working to

an average? One bum job, one bang-up one; average pretty good. That satisfies most folks. It don't satisfy me, not by a damn sight!"

He turned over job after job, with growing contempt.

"Look," he said. "This book ought to have been done on hundred-pound stock. You used eighty. See what it did to those vignettes? Godsakes, a'n't you learned the first fundamental principles of half-tone work? Tryin' to run those soft vignettes on this kind of stock—"

"The customer was pleased," said Philip. "Besides, we saved him over seven hundred dollars on the job by using the eighty-pound paper."

"There you go!" cried the old man. "Saving the customer money, and putting the Bosworth imprint on a cheap-John job. Why, I'd rather have lost all that book cost to produce than have my name on it. Yet you didn't even have sense enough to leave the imprint off, when you knew the job would be the worst backhanded advertisement that you could invent."

"If I remember correctly, Mr. Bosworth, we made a nice profit on it."

"Then you ought to be arrested," said the old man. "You skimmed your customer; you got him up an alley and sand-bagged him. You didn't protect him against his own short-sightedness. In other words, you prostituted the name of Bosworth—yes, by the Lord, you did! And I ain't a going to star. I for it—look here."

Swiftly, he rifled through the various jobs in the bunch of samples submitted by Philip.

"Rotten," he said. Then, as each successive piece of work fell from his fingers: "poor; fair; very mediocre; bad register; say, for Heaven's sake what kind of ink did you use to get that blue?"

"Now look here, boys, some one a few minutes ago said something about 'average.' Average what? Average lack of quality? That's all the average I can find. Let me tell you what you've been doing."

"First, you've let your fences get out of repair, and your competitors are ranging around like a lot of dogs in a sheep-pasture, killing off your business with 'price.'"

"Second, you've let the customer brow-beat you into giving him something cheaper than he had any business to buy, with the mistaken idea that he was saving money."

"Third, you've put my name on a lot of

poor stuff and busted my reputation for fine printing to smithereens.

"Fourth, whenever you've had a chance, you slipped over something on the customer, making a profit where you hadn't any moral right to a nickel.

"Fifth, I'm going to stop it, right here and now! I'm going to make you boys walk a chalk-line. Let me tell you, there's going to be some sweating around this place."

The old man stood up at his desk and leaned across threateningly. His keen gray eyes blazed with the light of battle. His white hair was rumpled into disorderly masses, his heavy under jaw thrust forward with menace.

"And now one thing more," he went on.

"I'm goin' to get to the bottom of this. I'm going to find out if it's all lack of judgment, or whether it's something deeper. I'd like to believe that's all it is; but, by God, when I see a nice business like this wrecked—yes, that's what I said, wrecked—I want to tell you, my suspicions are aroused. I trusted you fellows, and you have done me dirt. I'm not accusing any one singly—but you can bet your life I'm going to get to the bottom of this mess and see who's responsible for it. I'm going to see first how bad the mess is; I'm afraid I've only scratched the surface. Now clear out of here. I want to think."

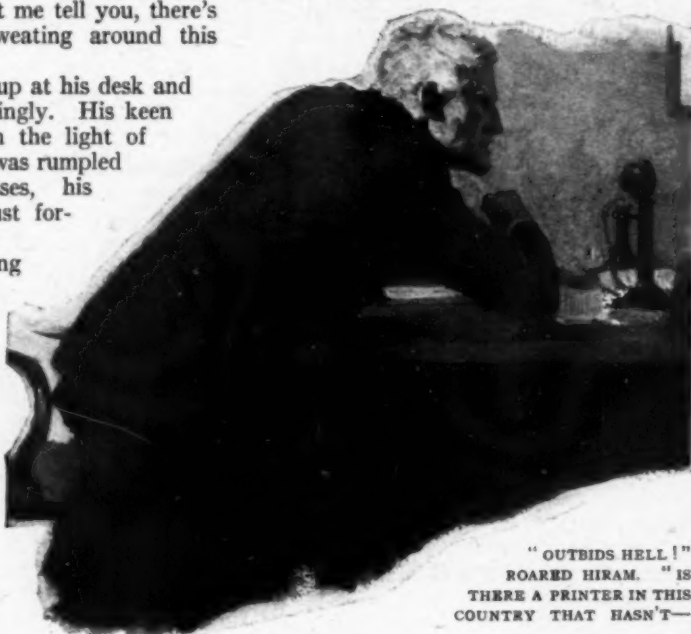
The "boys" all filed out sheepishly. So the old man couldn't be relegated so easily to a seat by the chimney-corner. You couldn't kid Hiram into letting well enough alone. He was up on his ear, was Hiram. He was a bad man when he got going—yes, sir!

Some of the help whose period of service antedated the old man's illness remembered how he used to rave when things went wrong. Once he had taken a husky pressman by the back of the neck and kicked him down a flight of stairs, because the h. p. had given him some back talk. Yes, the old man was a bad actor—unreasonable,

too. He wouldn't listen when you tried to explain. He was deaf, dumb, and blind to the best alibi in the world.

V

PHILIP BOSWORTH called Desire Brown into his office one afternoon soon after this turbulent conference.



"OUTBIDS HELL!"
ROARED HIRAM. "IS
THERE A PRINTER IN THIS
COUNTRY THAT HASN'T—"

"I'm not feeling right," said Philip. "I want to go to a show and get cheered up; and I want nice company."

"Is that an invitation?" asked Desire.

"It is; and it includes dinner at any place you choose. Is it a go?"

Desire shook her head.

"I'd better not. It's very nice of you, but—"

"For goodness' sake, Desire, all you've handed me lately has been 'but.' You have developed an amazing talent for objections."

"Don't blame me, Phil; I don't want to get you in any worse trouble than you are in now."

Philip looked up, surprised. Desire was smiling.

"Yes," he said. "It is pretty fierce. The boss is down on the whole crew of us, including me."

"And me."

"You?"

"Yes, me. He doesn't approve of me in the least. I guess it was because that first

day he came into the office I didn't recognize him and show him a proper respect. I was to blame, too; men of his age are sensitive. I should have recognized him if I'd been more alert."

"Nonsense, Desire. He came plowing in here without warning, throwing a scare into everybody—and he's acted like a bull in a

Desire nodded.

"Prove it," challenged Philip.

"I can't; I'm only telling you what I think. I want you to keep your eyes and ears open. Don't be so easily influenced, Phil. Have some opinions of your own;—and if you can't see clearly, borrow your father's glasses for a while. He doesn't



—OUTBID US TIME AND AGAIN? HOW LONG SINCE YOU BOYS HAVE STARTED WORRYING ABOUT BIDS?"

china-shop ever since. Why didn't he stick to golf and let us alone?"

"I guess it was about time he took a hand," ventured the girl.

"Well, look who's here!" cried Philip. "That sounds funny, coming from you. I hear the old man's been positively insulting to you."

"Hush! No such thing. Philip, the trouble with you is, you're too credulous. You let people kid you to death!"

"'Kid' isn't a pretty word for a refined young lady to use."

"It expresses exactly what I mean. Wake up, Phil; 'father was right'!"

"Now, just for that, you've got to have dinner with me to-night. I want to know what you mean. It's darned unfair to hand me all this mysterious stuff about how credulous I am, and tell me I'm asleep at the switch—what are you trying to do, make me feel like a child? Do you think I'm getting something handed to me, and don't know it?"

miss much. No one around here is fooling that gentleman, believe me!"

Philip Bosworth was a rather self-satisfied young man. Starting out in life with the advantage of being Hiram's son, he had found that the relationship had also its disadvantages. He was Hiram's boy, and if he gained any respect of his associates, he was never sure it was unadulterated. But after Hiram got sick and left in search of health, and after Phil had been given charge of production by Curdy, he had felt that he was standing on his own pins. He was not borrowing glory or credit from Hiram Bosworth or any one else.

To be accused, along with Curdy and Nagel, of disastrous incompetency by his father, had been humiliating enough. He was clinging to the belief that Hiram was old-fashioned, out of date, swayed by irritation at finding his pet policies overthrown by a younger generation. The stubbornness of youth and a determination to prove the old man wrong had been stimulated by

Hiram's caustic criticisms. Philip was all for Curdy and the Curdian idea. He could see nothing wrong in the methods pursued, because he believed the Bosworth business a sound and money-making enterprise—more so than it had ever been under his father's management.

And now came Desire Brown to humiliate him still further. Philip had counted on her approval. Hiram disliked Desire. To Hiram she stood for the ideas of that management which had given her the high-sounding title of "secretary," and made her, in the old man's opinion, bigger than her job. Philip did not understand why Desire failed to resent the old man's offensive attitude toward her.

"You assume too much," he said stiffly. "I should think a decent loyalty to Mr. Curdy and the management should count for something with you. If the old man had his way, you'd be dismissed. You don't seem to see which side your bread is buttered on."

"I see the difference between right and wrong, that's all. I haven't any personal feelings in the matter. Your father, even with his queer prejudices, is bigger than all the rest of us put together."

"Well, how the dickens do you know? You're only a girl; you're not supposed to understand business. It strikes me you go rather out of your way when you presume to judge in a situation you're not competent to grasp."

"Mercy me! Do you expect me to sit around like a dummy and hammer a keyboard without knowing what's going on about me?"

Desire's eyes were flashing now. Her color was a trifle heightened. The effective disorder of the unruly curls about her face was not lessened by her indignation.

Philip Bosworth looked at her, and was more than ever aware of her beauty; and back of her beauty was something finer—a resolute stanchness of character which, no matter into what mistakes it seemed to be leading her, was nevertheless an admirable trait.

"Desire, you're a wonder," said the young man. "When you're mad, you're prettier than ever. I'm sorry. I give you credit for your sincerity, to say the least."

"Any fool can be honest," snapped Desire, and went out, closing the door behind her with unnecessary violence.

Philip sighed. He certainly did love De-

sire—but the man who married her would have to toe the mark.

He fell to wondering why she took that attitude toward the business. Well, girls were funny. Phil knew Desire had no use for Curdy. He thought it an unreasoning dislike; but let it be ever so illogical, it explained in a way the girl's obstinate defense of his father. Of course, Curdy was thoroughly all right; but Desire would be glad to find an excuse to take sides against the man, just because of that senseless feminine prejudice.

Yes, girls were funny; and life was rather a mess. You did the best you could and builded according to your lights; and then an old has-been came along and tried to show you what a poor, cheap, and inept workman you were. Philip would never believe that of himself, never. Hiram was a wrong-headed old meddler, even if he was Phil's father.

VI

"You look worried," said Mrs. Bosworth at dinner. "Don't you think so, Mary?"

"He never ought to have gone back to that old business. Dad, why didn't you let Phil and the rest of them run it? They were doing well, weren't they?"

Hiram grunted a non-committal reply. He ate his dinner in glum silence, and his wife and daughter had learned long since to respect such moods.

"Where's Phil?" he asked.

"He telephoned he wouldn't be home to dinner; he's dining with some sort of club—a business affair, he said."

"I know; it's the Typothetæ. Lot of printers get together and yammer about their troubles. I'm a member, but I never bother to go to the meetings. Too much talk. Still, they've done some good. I'm glad Phil takes an interest. It's a wonder he doesn't get mixed up with some girl. I hope he won't think of getting married for a while; he hasn't steadied enough."

Mary and her mother exchanged significant glances.

"I shouldn't call Phil actually indifferent to the charms of the ladies," observed Mary. "I only wish he liked girls of the right sort."

"The devil!" cried Hiram. "What d'you mean?"

"Girls in his own class, of course."

"Well, now, Miss Mary, just what would you call 'his own class'? You mean girls



"IT'S ALL ON
ACCOUNT OF
THAT WOMAN.
SHE'S HELPED
HER BOSS,
CURDY, TO
HYPNOTIZE
YOU"

with money? Brains? Social position? It all depends. If you mean you wish he'd shine up to some Fifth Avenue butterfly, I don't agree with you."

It was quite plain that Hiram was in an execrable humor; but as it happened, his daughter had been nagged all day by petty misfortunes—such as dismissing the car while shopping and then getting caught in a shower, and failing to receive an invitation to an affair that she would have given all her old boots to attend. So she welcomed

with a fierce joy the prospect of a rumpus with Hiram. "Well," she said, "would you consider stenographers in Phil's class?"

"I don't know but I would. Darn it, I've seen stenographers I thought would make mighty fine wives. Yes, if you want to know, I most decidedly think stenographers are in Phil's class, provided he's good enough to be considered in theirs."

The old man settled back in his chair and eyed his daughter with a grin of triumph. He guessed he had settled the argument, leaving nothing further to be said. Mary's aristocratic—not to say snobbish—ideas had always annoyed him, ever since she'd got back from a finishing-school.

But Mary wasn't so easily disposed of; the battle was just getting to be worth fighting.

"Well, then," she rejoined, "let's take the case of Miss Brown."

"Who the devil is Miss Brown? Good Anglo-Saxon name, I should say."

"You ought to know. She works in your office."

"Lord, how would I know? There might be six Miss Browns in my office for all—"

Hiram checked himself suddenly. By George, there was a Miss Brown! That little fluffy-haired upstart Curdy called his secretary—part of the new régime.

"What's her first name?" he asked suddenly.

"I believe it's something old-fashioned and quaint, like Prudence, or Faith, or—"

"It wouldn't be Desire, now, would it?"

"That's the one. She's rather attractive; but I suspect she's a schemer."

"Now, Mary," put in Mrs. Bosworth, "that's not at all nice of you. From what I've seen of her, she's as pretty and refined and ladylike as can be. I don't blame Phil a bit."

Mrs. Bosworth was not above recalling the days when she had sat on a high stool and stuck type in a job-printing office, somewhere in Massachusetts. She couldn't see a whole lot of social distinction between doing that and pounding the keys. The ultimate result was much the same.

Mary sniffed. It seemed she had stirred up a double opposition. She prepared for a new onslaught, and, turning to her father, opened her lips to speak. But his gaze was fixed inimically on her mother.

"Now, ma," he said truculently, "what the dickens do you know about it? Do you want Phil to go mixing up with that kind of girls?"

Mary was breathless. She had expected a spirited reply from Hiram; and now, inexplicably, he had hopped over to her side of the fence. It was incredible; but she welcomed this unexpected turn of events and pointed her weapons at the new foe.

"There, mother, you see father's agreeing with me, after all."

Mrs. Bosworth was equally startled, for Hiram, she well knew, was the soul of democratic principle. Still, it wasn't unlike him, when in a bad humor, to exhibit just such perversity.

"But you just said—" she began.

"I didn't!" cried Hiram. "Besides, circumstances alter cases. I know that young lady; and by gorry, if Phil's shining up to her, he'll hear from me, that's all! Say, what's been going on while I was away, anyhow? You've been home a good deal of the time. Why didn't you warn me?"

"Good land!" observed the baffled lady. "I thought it would please you. I thought Phil would tell you himself when he got ready. It's his business."

"Well, I'll make it my business. He'll mighty soon find that out!"

When Phil got home that night, the old man was waiting up for him.

"Come in the library and have a cigar," said Hiram. "I want to talk to you."

When the two men were settled, Hiram opened fire. He first brought up the condition of the business.

"Phil," he said, "I'm your father. I hate to see you set yourself against me down at the office. Instead of making it easy for me to untangle the mess we're in, you make it harder. What the dickens has got into you?"

"We're not in a mess, father. The business is in a good, healthy condition, and you're just imagining trouble."

"That's it, that's it," said Hiram, his temper rising. "If I hadn't come back when I did, you boys would have ruined it."

"But, father," protested Phil, "we're doing more work than ever. We're always busy; we seldom have a press stand idle an hour. Do you know how much it costs us per day to have one of those big presses stand still?"

"As if I didn't! But I know how much it costs to have 'em running on cheap, skinned, small-profit jobs, such as you fellows have got into the habit of turning out. Phil, for Heaven's sake, wake up! Can't you see the business isn't anything like what it used to be? All rush and riot and wear and tear, and the element of risk twice as great?"

"Business conditions—"

"Business conditions my eye! You never saw a time when you couldn't find people who would pay big prices for the best work. You boys have tried so hard to meet competition that you have actually attracted it. Lord! I never worried about competition. What I put my mind on was, first, selling the stuff right, then turning it out right. That's a competition your competitor can't meet."

"Say, what has become of all the stock we used to keep on hand? Don't you boys keep any paper ready for the presses any more? Do you buy from hand to mouth, like any piking little printer? If you do, you're not getting the best prices."

"That's not in my department, dad; but in a general way, I believe Curdy has thought the market didn't warrant keeping much money tied up in stock. Prices might take a slump—"

"Have prices taken a slump in the last three years?"

"Not that I know of; but—"

"You're passing the buck, boy. You let Curdy shunt you off into a job with a high-sounding title, and that satisfied you. You're my son; you ought to have displayed more force. Great Scott! I taught you the game; why let Curdy dictate the policy of the house?"

"He doesn't. But the business had to be departmentalized. That's the way to get efficiency. It's the modern idea—"

"Leach Curdy's idea, that's what it is. I know the efficiency game as well as you, young man; but I'm beginning to believe Curdy's put the fish into it. Things ain't right, I tell you, they ain't right. If I could get a little help, a little cooperation, I'd soon show you where the holes are. Why, that business is as full of leaks as a sponge."

"Dad, that's calamity-howling."

The old man groaned and beat with a clenched hand upon the side of his head.

"It's that damned woman," he said suddenly.

"Woman? What do you mean?"

"The Brown girl, Curdy's stenographer—secretary, he calls her. I hated her the minute I set eyes—"

"Now, father, you quit. I don't stand for that kind of talk. Desire Brown's the finest girl in the world. And let me tell you—"

"You can't tell me anything!" roared Hiram. "Ever since I walked into the office two weeks ago, everybody's set themselves against me. Say, Phil, do you realize that it's my own business, which I built up from nothing, and which I turned over to you boys to manage for me while I got my health fixed up? Now I'm back, and every one treats me like a superannuated old fossil. I'm defied and opposed and cheated—"

"You talk like a wild man, dad."

"I am a wild man—I'm damn wild. I'm half crazy. Sometimes I wish I'd stayed away and let you fool-headed youngsters go your own gait. But I couldn't. It's in my blood; besides, let me tell you something. All I've got is tied up in the business. I never laid aside a cent of personal funds—always put my profits back into the Bosworth Press. All that I have now is what the business earns. The dividends 'll stop pretty soon, and then where'll your mother and I be—and Mary?"

"The business is all right, I tell you, father."

"And I'm an interfering old fool, eh? I knew you felt that way before I'd been in the office half an hour."

Hiram bowed his head in his hands and groaned. He was pitiful—a great hulk of a man, full of sound strength and the power that comes with maturity; yet now he was baffled, because of the opposition of a son who wrong-headedly persisted in blinding himself to facts.

"I'll show you," cried the old man, getting to his feet suddenly. "I'll show you! I've got to do it alone—my own son won't turn a hand for me. God, Phil, if you'd only see it would be for your own good to put your shoulder to the wheel—but you won't. I say it's all on account of that woman. She's helped her boss, Curdy, to hypnotize you."

"If you say another word about that girl, dad, I'll leave the room. I can stand your accusations of incompetency and inefficiency and bad judgment—I know you're wrong, and we've run the company right; but I don't have to listen when you talk that way about Desire, and I won't."

"I'll say anything I please about her, the pert little upstart." Hiram began to mimic Desire's first polite demand, made on that morning of his return: "*Who shall I say wants to see him?*"

"Good night, father," said Phil quietly.

He was in a towering rage. His father was so unjust, so unreasoning, so actually malicious in his attitude toward Desire. Phil might have said that Desire, alone among those competent to judge, was in sympathy with the old man. But what was the use? He was too angry to give his father the satisfaction of knowing that any one agreed with him. He slammed the library door behind him and stumped off grumpily to his room.

(To be concluded in the December number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)



THE GALATA QUARTER OF CONSTANTINOPLE, LOOKING ACROSS THE GOLDEN HORN FROM STAMBOUL, OR OLD CONSTANTINOPLE

From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York

Constantinople, the Key City of the Near East

ITS LONG AND DRAMATIC HISTORY, ITS IMPORTANCE AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S
GREAT STRATEGIC POINTS, AND THE PUZZLING PROBLEM
OF ITS FUTURE CONTROL

By Frederic Austin Ogg

Professor of Political Science in the University of Wisconsin

RETURNING to his tent from one of the anxious interviews with Czar Alexander I which preceded the treaty of Tilsit, Napoleon instructed his secretary, M. de Méneval, to lay before him the largest map of Europe that could be secured. The two sovereigns had agreed, in principle, upon an alliance, and upon a division of the European world between them. In ecstatic contemplation of the proposed arrangement, the emotional Czar had embraced his brother monarch, exclaiming:

"What is Europe? Where is it, if it is not you and I?"

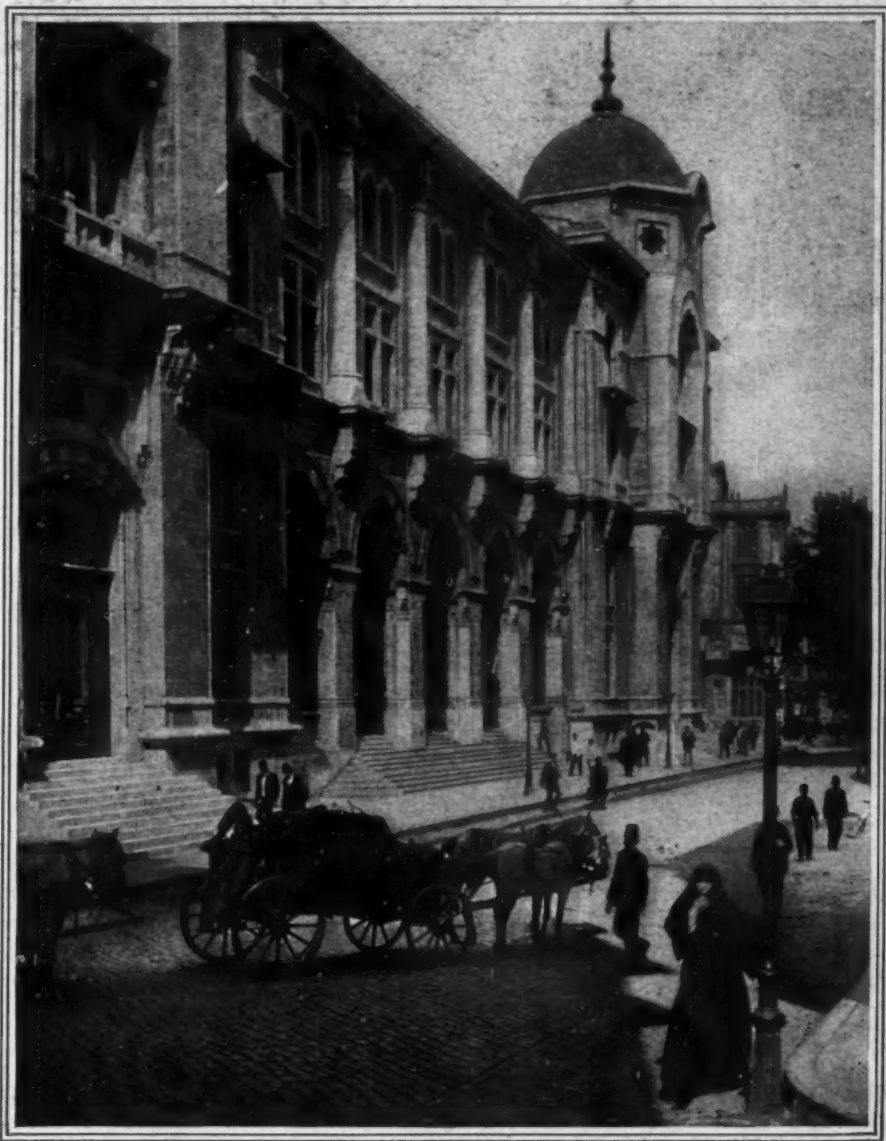
There had been but one hitch. Alexander had insisted that Russia should have Constantinople. To bring about the realization of this age-long ambition he had shown himself willing to pay any price. Napoleon had demurred, and was now retiring to consider his final answer. With map outstretched, the conqueror—already master of most of the countries depicted—gazed at its features long and thoughtfully. His decision lacked nothing of definiteness.

"Constantinople! Constantinople!" he exclaimed, pounding the table with his fist. "Never! It is the empire of the world!"

No student of history needs to be told that the great city on the Golden Horn, together with the narrow straits which constitute its gateways, has been a chief storm-center of international politics for five hundred years, that it was the direct origin of many of the wars fought in the

nineteenth century, that it has perhaps cost humanity more in anxiety and bloodshed than any other single spot upon earth.

Not only that, for one of the main things that the world has been fighting about in the great war recently ended—the future historian may say *the main thing*—is Constantinople. It was the chronic question of the Near East that tempted German imperialism to launch its great assault upon



THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE OF CONSTANTINOPLE, A HANDSOME MODERN BUILDING AMONG THE OLD STREETS OF STAMBOUL

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

the peace of the world. In this many-sided Near Eastern problem, the most important element was the control of the straits—the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; and the

have been only makeshifts grounded upon suspicion and hatred. Perhaps it is too much to hope that even the greatest of all wars and the most comprehensive of all

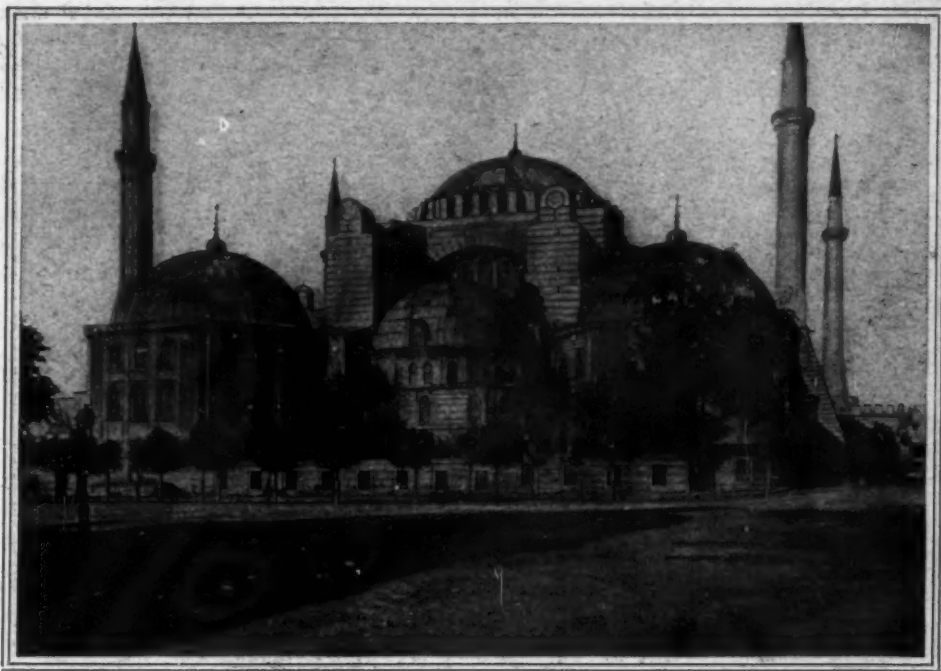


INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF ST. SOPHIA—ALL FIGURES AND CHRISTIAN EMBLEMS IN THE ANCIENT MOSAICS ARE COVERED WITH GOLD-LEAF AND PAINTED CANVAS

crux of the question of the straits was the possession of Constantinople.

For generations men have endeavored, by all the arts of diplomacy, by all the devices of political combinations, and by all the violence of wars, to untie the Near Eastern knot; but the results arrived at

peace agreements will bring the problem to a full and final solution. There is, however, at present an opportunity to make of Constantinople somewhat less of a breeding-ground of rivalry, covetousness, and conflict than it has been in the past; and the United States, in common with all non-



EXTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF ST. SOPHIA, OR HOLY WISDOM, BUILT AS A CHRISTIAN CATHEDRAL BY THE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN IN 532-537

imperialistic peoples and nations, has a very live interest in seeing that this is done.

The first thing to be noted about Constantinople, historically, is that it is peculiarly a product of its environment. The English made London, and the French Paris; geography made Constantinople. The original city, Byzantium, was founded in the semimythical ages by the swarming, adventurous sons of Greece, because they perceived the strategic value of the site for trade. And in A.D. 328, when the Emperor Constantine ordered the conversion of the old Greek settlement into "New Rome," the eastern capital of the far-flung Roman Empire, he selected it, rather than any of the other towns with which the eastern Mediterranean lands were dotted, because it excelled them all in the beauty of its location and in its adaptability for purposes of war, communication, and political leadership. A recent writer says:

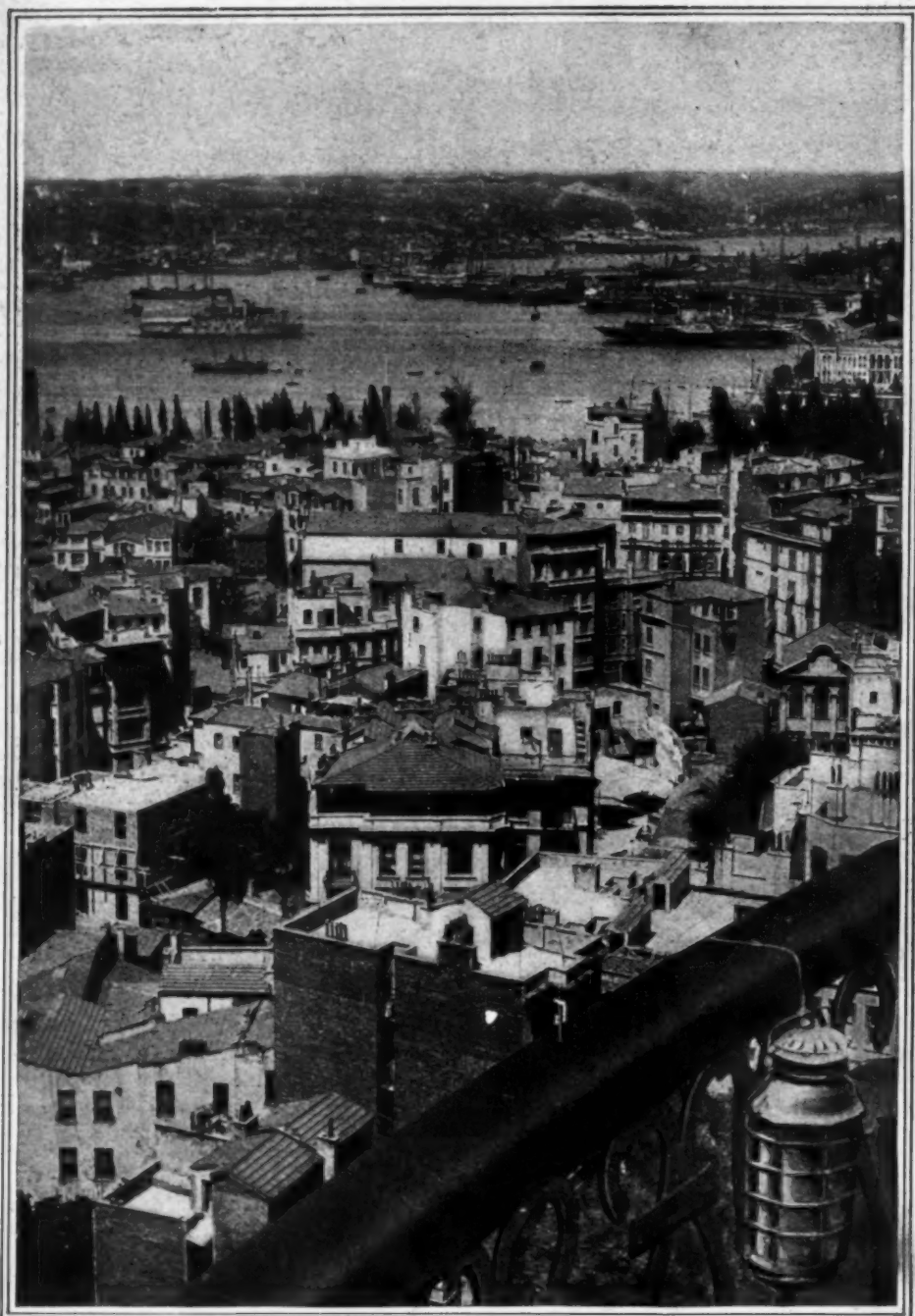
Situated where Europe and Asia are parted by a channel never more than five miles across, and sometimes less than half a mile wide, placed at a point commanding the great waterway between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the position affords immense scope for commercial enterprise and political action in rich and varied regions of

the world. The least a city in that situation can claim as its appropriate sphere of influence is the vast domain extending from the Adriatic to the Persian Gulf, and from the Danube to the eastern Mediterranean.

Moreover, the site constituted a natural citadel, difficult to approach or to invest, and an almost impregnable refuge in the hour of defeat, within which broken forces might rally to retrieve disaster. To surround it, an enemy required to be strong upon both land and sea. Foes advancing through Asia Minor would have their march arrested, and their blows kept beyond striking distance, by the moat which the waters of the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Dardanelles combine to form. The narrow straits into which the waterway connecting the Mediterranean with the Black Sea contracts, both to the north and to the south of the city, could be rendered impassable to hostile fleets approaching from either direction; while on the landward side the line of defense was so short that it could be strongly fortified, and held against large numbers by a comparatively small force.

Nature, indeed, cannot relieve men of their duty to be wise and brave, but in the marvelous configuration of land and sea about Constantinople nature has done her utmost to enable human skill and courage to establish there the splendid and stable throne of a great empire.

Constantinople, therefore, is to all intents and purposes an impregnable city, because of the nature of its immediate environs. Through a period of sixteen hundred years



THE MOUTH OF THE GOLDEN HORN, OR HARBOR OF CONSTANTINOPLE, LOOKING FROM THE GALATA TOWER, SEEN IN THE ENGRAVING ON PAGE 210, TO SERAGLIO POINT, THE EXTREMITY OF THE PENINSULA ON WHICH STAMBOUL LIES, AND ACROSS THE BOSPORUS TO THE ASIATIC SHORE

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

it has been captured only twice by a foreign foe, and the costly failure of the Allies' Dardanelles campaign in 1915-1916 demonstrated afresh its invulnerability. It is also a city situated to command, or at all events to influence greatly, the intercourse, whether peaceful or warlike, of the entire world. It dominates the only possible water outlet of Russia and Roumania to the Mediterranean; it lies athwart the great historic routes of trade between southern Europe and western Asia; it is a chief vantage-point on the Titanic railway lines, built or projected, by which India, China, and the rich world of the Malay states are to be linked up with the Near East and with Europe.

When the Channel Tunnel and the proposed bridge from Constantinople to Scutari are completed, it will be possible to take a through railway carriage from Charing Cross to Berlin, Vienna, Belgrade, Constantinople, and Aleppo, and thence to Bagdad—presently to Bombay, and no doubt eventually to Cairo and Cape Town, or to Calcutta and Madras, or even to Shanghai and Canton.

THE DRAMATIC STORY OF OLD BYZANTIUM

The second cardinal fact about this wonder city is the richly dramatic character of its history. The story falls into two main chapters, according as it relates to events before or after the Turkish conquest of 1453.

In the first era the place rose from a petty trading-station to the most populous, the strongest, the most beautiful, and the most cultured city in the world. Beginning, in Constantine's day, as an Eastern capital coordinate with Rome, it became, after the dissolution of the Western Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, the sole capital; and for almost a thousand years it enjoyed, as the heir of Rome, not only the political, but also the religious, headship of the great Greek-speaking and Greek-thinking world eastward from the Adriatic to Persia.

Here, in imposing ecumenical councils, was wrought out the theology of the undivided church, and also the ecclesiastical system which still holds sway wherever the Greek Orthodox faith prevails. Here were developed the first principles of Byzantine art, which has in all later ages been more influential upon ecclesiastical architecture than any other. Here, while western Europe groped in ignorance, were preserved

in cloisters and libraries the finest fruits of ancient learning and letters. Here were nursed the world-famous teachers whose dispersion in Italy and elsewhere made possible the glories of the Renaissance. Here was framed that remarkable Justinian Code, which, as a digest and compendium of the great body of Roman law, survives and dominates in all subsequent legislation.

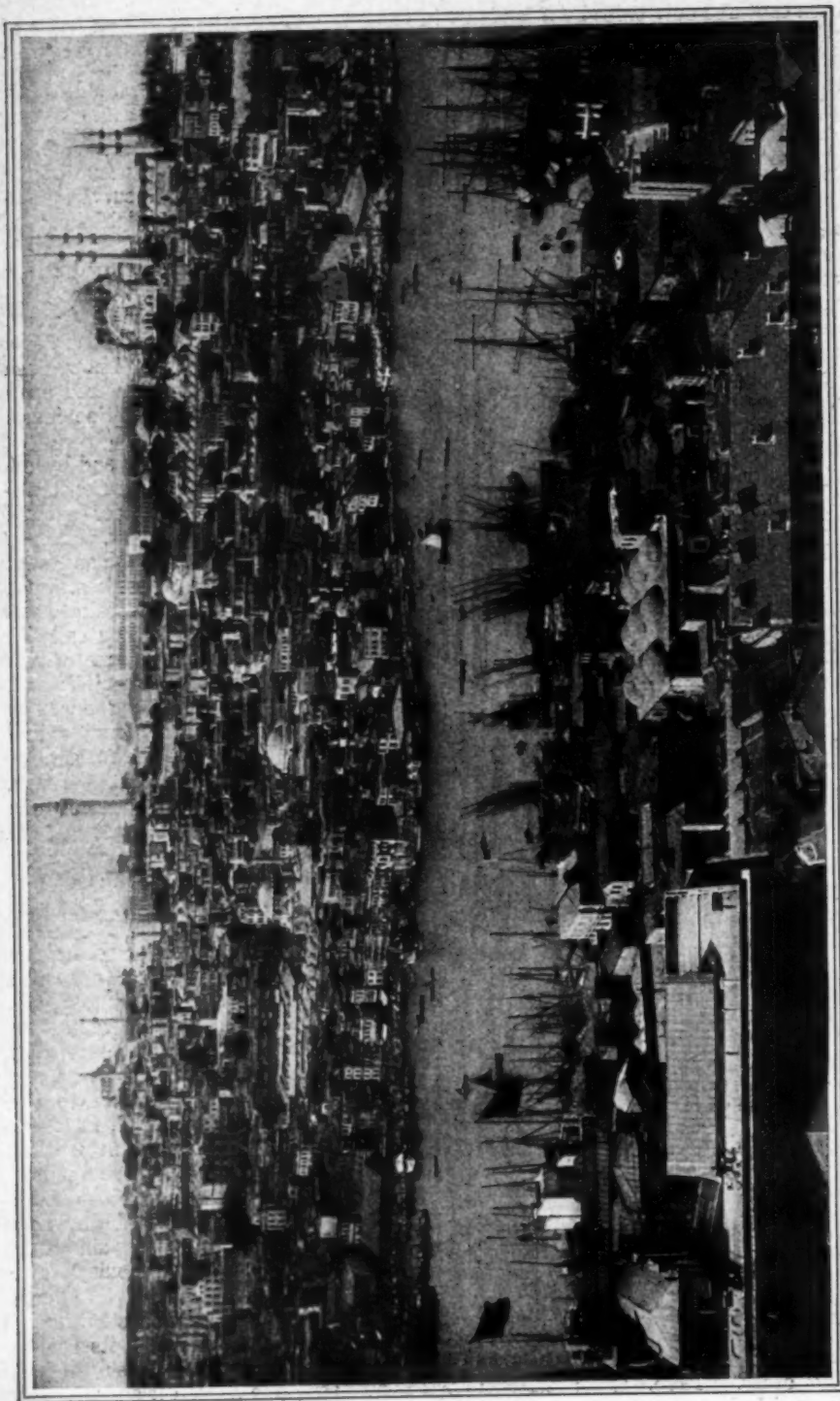
So vast, indeed, were Constantinople's cultural contributions that it may be said with truth that no city ever wielded such an influence upon the course of human affairs except Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem; and, as all students of history know, even the gifts which these rivals showered upon civilization often bear a Byzantine image and superscription.

Beset by internal weaknesses and by external foes, the empire of which Constantinople was the head and center showed phenomenal power of survival. Eleven dynasties of Christian rulers came and went in proud succession. The Arabs stripped off Syria and Egypt; the Seljuk Turks took most of Asia Minor, and as early as 1080 planted the crescent at Nicæa, within sight of the battlements of the capital; and, after swaying back and forth for two hundred years, the contest of Crusader and Infidel went finally against the former.

But it was only in the fifteenth century, when the dread Osmanlis, or Ottoman Turks, already masters of most of the Balkan peninsula, turned their full force against the imperial city, that the day of final eclipse came. On May 29, 1453, the hapless Emperor Constantine XIII was slain as he defended the last rampart of his capital; and from that hour the Turk ruled the city and all that was tributary to it.

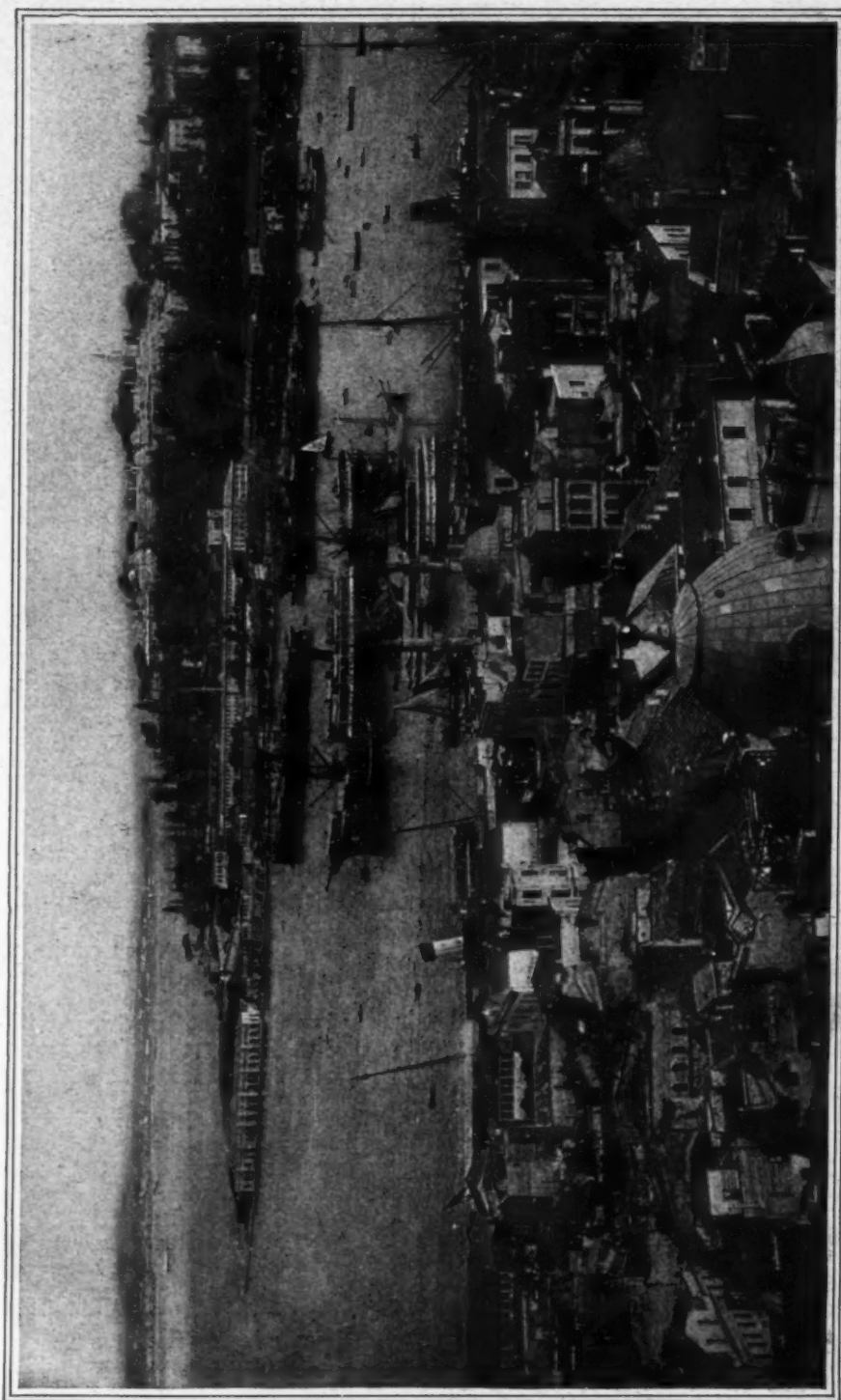
At that hour, too, the Near Eastern question was born. For the essence of that question is the possession of the key city on the straits by a people akin to the European family neither in race, in creed, in speech, in social customs, nor in political traditions and aptitudes. For five hundred years Turkish power on the Golden Horn has meant for Europe a problem, now tragic, now comic, now bordering almost on burlesque, but always paradoxical and baffling.

After the capture of Constantinople, Ottoman power rose rapidly to its zenith. The whole of the eastern basin of the Mediterranean—the Ægean islands, Egypt, Syria, and the northern coast of Africa—



THE CITY OF MOSQUES AND MINARETS—VIEW OF STAMBOUL, OR OLD CONSTANTINOPLE, LOOKING FROM THE GALATA QUARTER ACROSS THE NARROW WATERS OF THE GOLDEN HORN

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York



SERAGLIO POINT, LOOKING FROM GALATA ACROSS THE MOUTH OF THE GOLDEN HORN—THE WHITE BUILDINGS ON THE POINT ARE THE SERAGLIO, FORMERLY THE PALACE OF THE TURKISH SULTANS, BUT ABANDONED AS A ROYAL RESIDENCE SINCE 1839

From a colorlighted photograph by the Press Illustrating Service, New York



THE IMPERIAL MOSQUE, WITH TURKISH TROOPS DRAWN UP FOR THE CEREMONY OF THE SELAMLIK—THIS TAKES PLACE EVERY FRIDAY, WHEN THE SULTAN GOES FROM THE YILDIZ PALACE TO THE MOSQUE

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

was brought under the yoke, and all central and western Europe was threatened. Thirteen times Solyman the Magnificent (1520-1566) marched through the capital's gates at the head of an army on some distant campaign; thirteen times he returned in triumph.

Turkish rule fell on the old Byzantine cities and lands like a pall. The new masters were, in reality, only a small, exclusive, alien governing class, whose management of affairs blended inefficiency, cruelty, corruption, and tyranny in equal degrees. The Christian population, although protected to some extent in life, occupation, and property, was reduced to tax-bondage; the free political spirit of earlier days was crushed out; culture was allowed to languish.

More than any other part of the former empire, Constantinople reflected the character of the new and unhappy order. With its name changed to Stamboul, its churches converted into mosques, its government made the prey of scheming pashas, and its

trade deflected into other and safer channels, the city fell from its once proud position and saw its glories pass to Rome, London, Paris, and other western rivals. Such trade and prosperity as it kept arose entirely from its location and its traditional connections. The Turk, then as now, ignorant of the first principles of political economy, placed obstacles of every sort in the path of its development.

THE DECLINE OF THE TURKISH POWER

As early as the reign of Solyman, which is generally accounted the noontide of Ottoman greatness and prosperity, the seeds of decay were sown; and in the sixteenth century the empire entered upon the long and steady decline which has brought it to its present pass. The disaster at Lepanto, in 1571, broke its sea-power forever; the failure to take advantage of the distractions of the Christian nations during the Thirty Years' War betokened a loss of energy and initiative; the relief of Vienna by the brilliant exploit of the Polish king, John

Sobieski, in 1683, not only saved the Austrian capital, but completely freed Europe from the terror by which, for two and a half centuries, it had been oppressed.

Never again was Christendom really menaced by Turkish arms. On the contrary, the Christian peoples began to recover the ground that had been lost, and everywhere the Turk was put on the defensive.

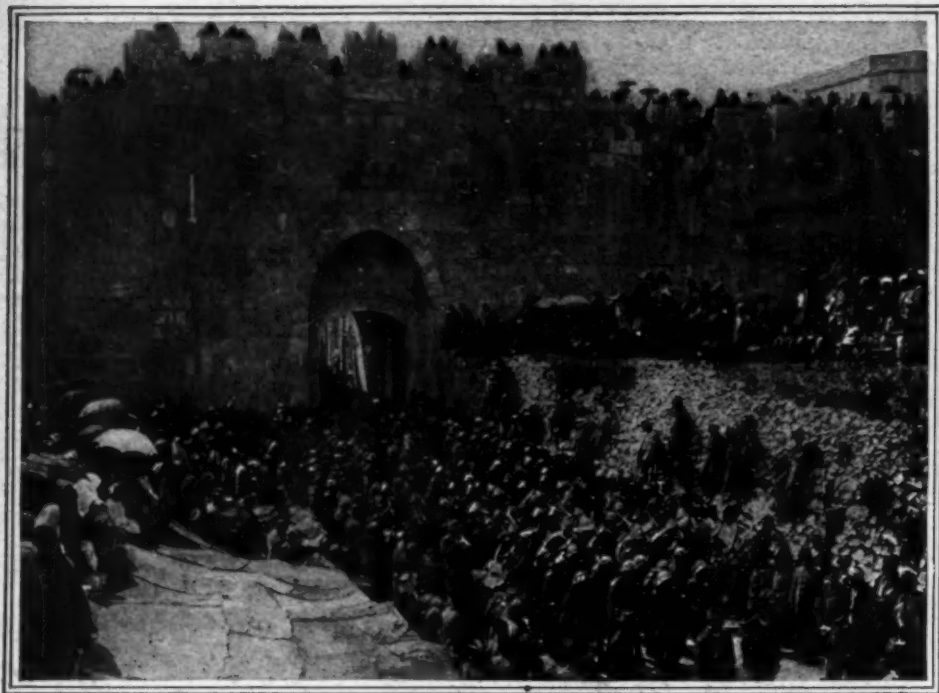
The problem of repelling the Ottoman onslaughts was, however, quickly superseded

by another problem almost equally alarming and decidedly more intricate—the disposition to be made of the territories successively wrested from the Sultan's control, including eventually Constantinople itself. For a long time—certainly throughout the eighteenth century—it was assumed that the inheritance would devolve upon one or more of the great powers, most likely Russia. Serbians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Roumanians, and the other submerged nationalities of the reconquered lands were



RUINED REMAINS OF THE ANCIENT THEodosian WALL, BUILT IN THE FIFTH CENTURY TO PROTECT CONSTANTINOPLE ON THE LANDWARD SIDE

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York



A CEREMONIAL PROCESSION ENTERING CONSTANTINOPLE BY ONE OF THE GATES
IN THE THEODOSIAN WALL

not expected to have any voice in the decision reached.

The nineteenth century, however, put an entirely new face on the situation. Led by the Serbs and the Greeks, the Balkan peoples rose in rebellion, asserted their right to separate political organization, and took honorable places in the family of nations. The great powers were forced, not only to recognize them as costates, lawfully possessing large sections of the former Ottoman dominion, but as free agents whose wishes must be consulted on the question of the ultimate disposition of Constantinople itself.

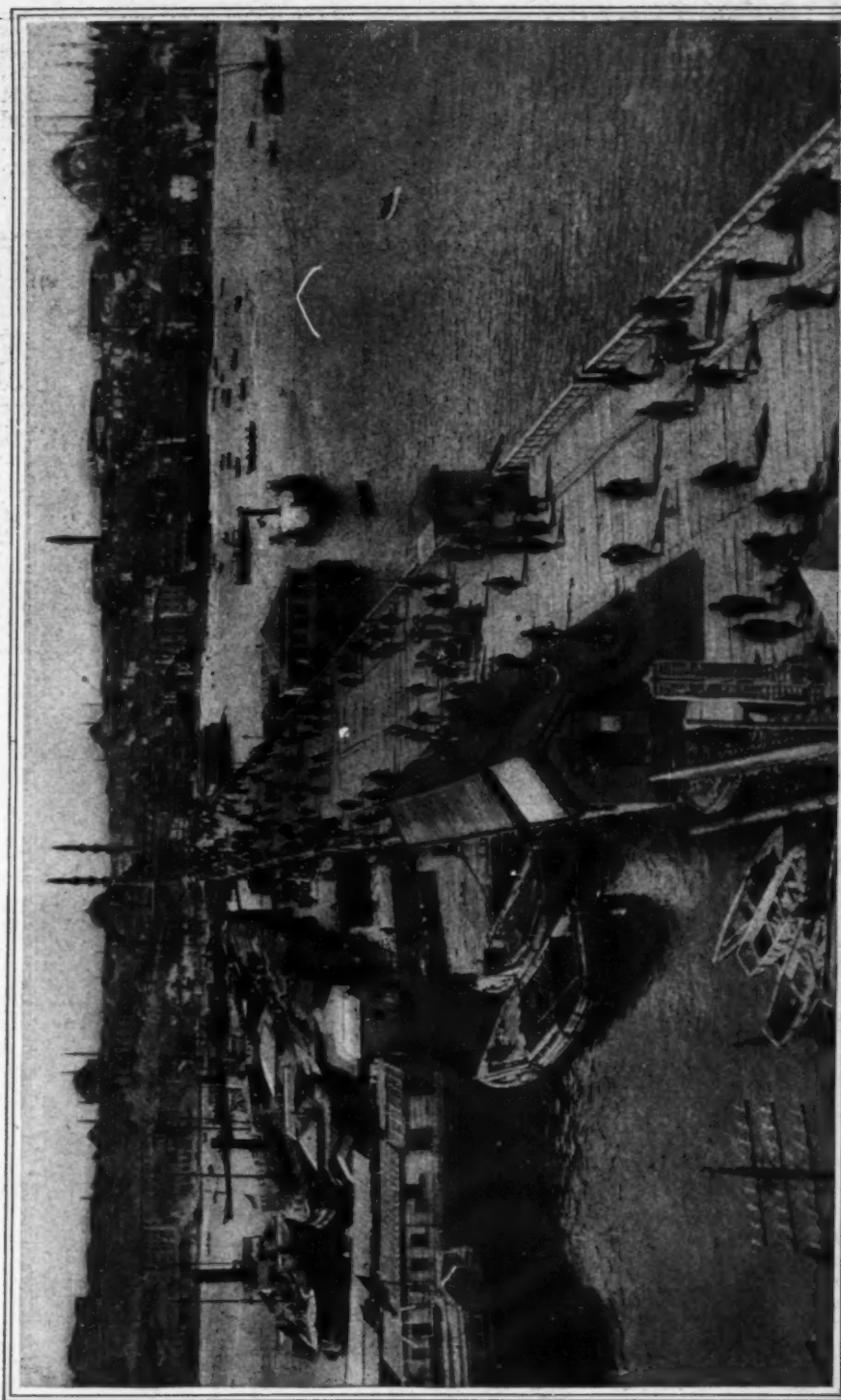
Successive wars, treaties, and understandings brought it about that by 1914 only eleven thousand square miles of Turkish soil in Europe—an area less than one-fourth that of the State of New York—remained to be disposed of. At first glance, the Near Eastern question seemed therefore to have been largely solved. When, however, it was recalled that this remaining Turkish territory included Constantinople and the lands bordering the straits, it became apparent that only the fringes of the problem had really as yet been touched.

The situation on the eve of the world war was complicated in the extreme.

THE QUESTION OF THE STRAITS

In the first place—assuming the continuance of Turkish sovereignty in Europe—there was the question of revising the highly contentious “rule of the straits.” It is a general principle of international law that a strait dividing the land territory of a single state, which is not too wide to be commanded by shore batteries, forms part of the territorial waters of that state. The riparian state has exclusive control, unless the strait forms a necessary international highway, in which case all nations have a right to send their war-ships and merchantmen through it on legitimate voyages. The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, therefore, are Turkish waters; but, constituting an international highway between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, they would be open, barring special arrangements, to the war-ships and merchant craft of all peaceful nations.

The actual status of these two important passages is, however, determined by convention, and does not conform to the

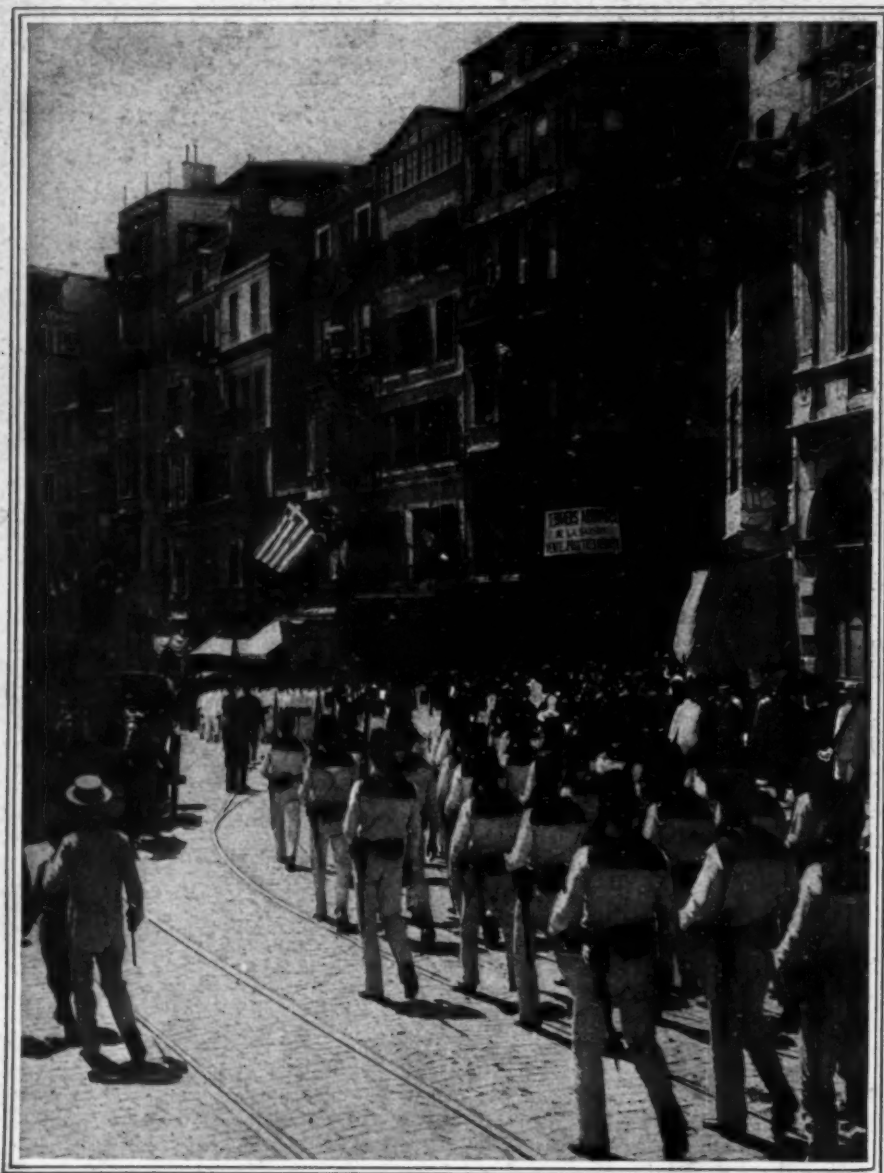


ONE OF THE TWO PONTON BRIDGES ACROSS THE GOLDEN HORN, CONNECTING STAMBOUL, OR OLD CONSTANTINOPLE, WITH THE NEWER QUARTERS OF GALATA, THE BUSINESS CENTER OF THE TURKISH CAPITAL, AND PERRA, THE CHIEF FOREIGN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

general rule. The Ottoman government long undertook to exclude both the war-ships and the merchantmen of other states from use of the straits, at all events except by license. Such restrictions became intolerable, and at length the powers obtained treaties under which war-ships were not allowed, it is true, to pass through the

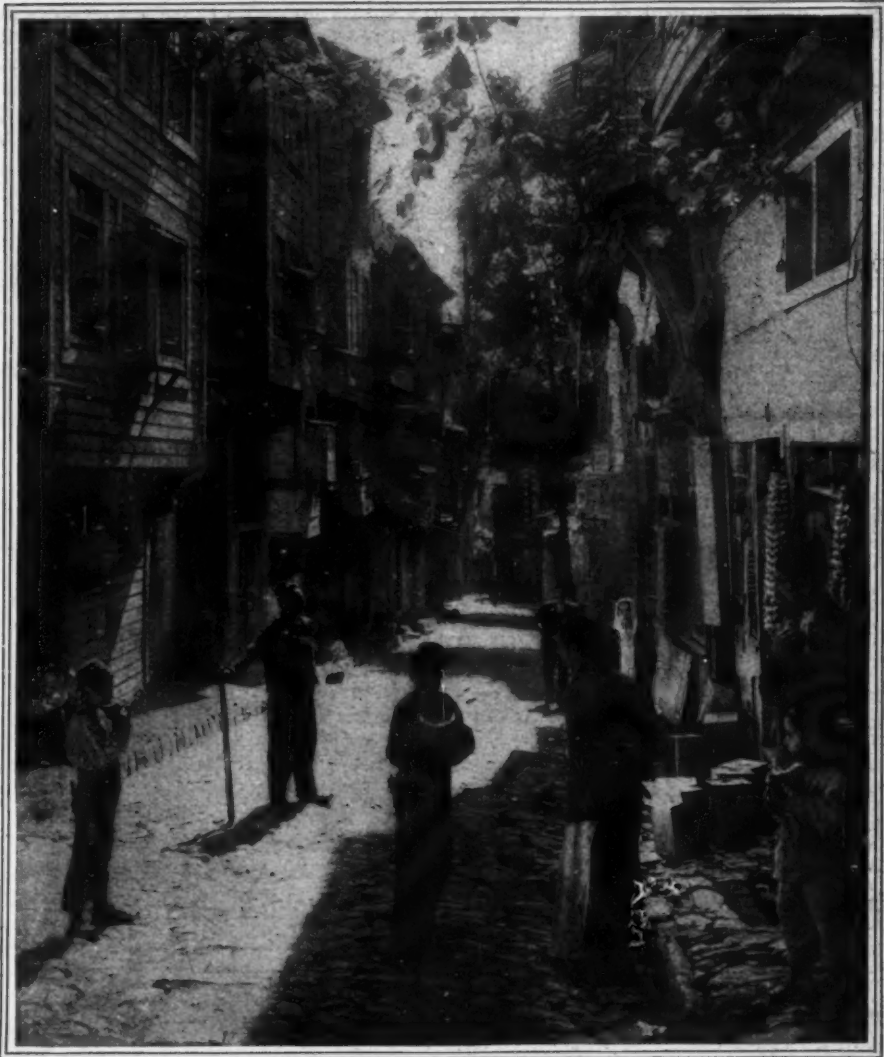
straits, but merchantmen were expressly permitted to do so. This "rule of the straits," arising in the eighteenth century, found confirmation in the treaty of Paris in 1856, the treaty of Berlin in 1878, and many other nineteenth-century agreements.

The arrangement was at best a compromise, and it never gave satisfaction.



STREET SCENE IN PERA, THE CHIEF FOREIGN RESIDENTIAL SECTION OF CONSTANTINOPLE—A BODY OF TURKISH MARINES IS SEEN ON THE MARCH

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York



A TYPICAL TURKISH STREET IN CONSTANTINOPLE—THE TURKS STILL BUILD MOST OF THEIR HOUSES OF WOOD, AND THEIR CAPITAL HAS BEEN SCOURGED BY MANY DISASTROUS FIRES

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

The United States acquiesced in it, but refused to recognize its legal validity. Russia was, of course, the nation most vitally affected, because the rule completely bottled up her Black Sea fleet. During the war with Japan she evaded the restriction by sending cruisers through the straits in the guise of merchantmen; and she repeatedly put forth every endeavor—now combining with the Central Powers, now going to the aid of the Balkan states, now negotiating with the Porte directly—to

bring about its abrogation. The rule still stood in 1914; but nothing was clearer than that the Near East would continue to be a troubled scene as long as it did so.

All this, however, was on the assumption that the Sultan's government would continue to hold sway in Constantinople and its environs. But whether this would be the case was extremely doubtful, even before 1914. The Sick Man was assuredly never in a worse way than at the opening of the present century; the revolution of 1908

afforded but temporary relief; the Balkan wars of 1912-1913 brought his demise manifestly nearer; no one could tell in 1914 what sudden turn of events might mean the end.

In this situation the old question of who should have Constantinople took on a new importance. Certain states openly eyed the city covetously; many others had no hesitation in letting it be understood that they expected to have a hand in its disposal.

A CHAOS OF CONFLICTING CLAIMS

The oldest and most natural claimant was Russia. If the Russian people of modern times have been impregnated more deeply with one idea than with any other, it is that their country has a right to the succession of the Greek emperors, and that Constantinople must and will be Russian. Alexander I made this dominating national desire clear to Napoleon more than a hundred years ago, and at no time has the grand object been lost to view.

The Russian claim is based partly on sentiment, and partly on an aspiration to recover for the Orthodox Church its historic seat, but mainly on economic and political considerations of a very practical character. Before the great war more than half of the total water-borne commerce of the country flowed to and from the ports of the Black and Azov Seas by way of the straits. Theoretically, this passageway was open and free. Practically, it was obstructed by arbitrary and vexatious regulations, and it was liable at any time to be closed by either the Turks themselves or by any of their numerous enemies.

Twice in the three years preceding the war the Dardanelles was shut against all traffic, with the result of shattering the prosperity of the great port of Odessa, and of cutting Russia's foreign trade in half. To obtain a great ice-free port, an independent outlet to the southern seas, and freedom to move their war-ships at will as other nations do, the Russians felt that somehow, some time, Constantinople must be made theirs.

A second state that has hoped to acquire the City of the Straits is Greece. The Greek claim is based partly on history; and it must be admitted that historical rights to the place, whatever they may be worth in these days, are possessed by Greece alone. In addition, Constantinople had, in 1914, a Greek population of more than two hundred

thousand, and Greeks entered prominently into most phases of the city's life.

It was difficult to argue, however, that Greece had any practical need of the place. Her maritime position was unexcelled without it, and no vital economic interest was involved. Nor was the ethnical argument convincing, for, after all, Greeks formed but one-fifth of the total population.

To tell the truth, each of the Balkan states looked on Constantinople as in some way its heritage. Roumania had the same economic reasons for desiring to possess it that Russia had, for it was the gateway to her only seaports. Bulgaria, although already controlling an ice-free port south of the straits, cherished a futile dream of possession, and especially hoped to see the ambition of Russia thwarted. Even Serbia watched the whirligig of politics in the hope of discerning a chance to plant her authority at the coveted spot.

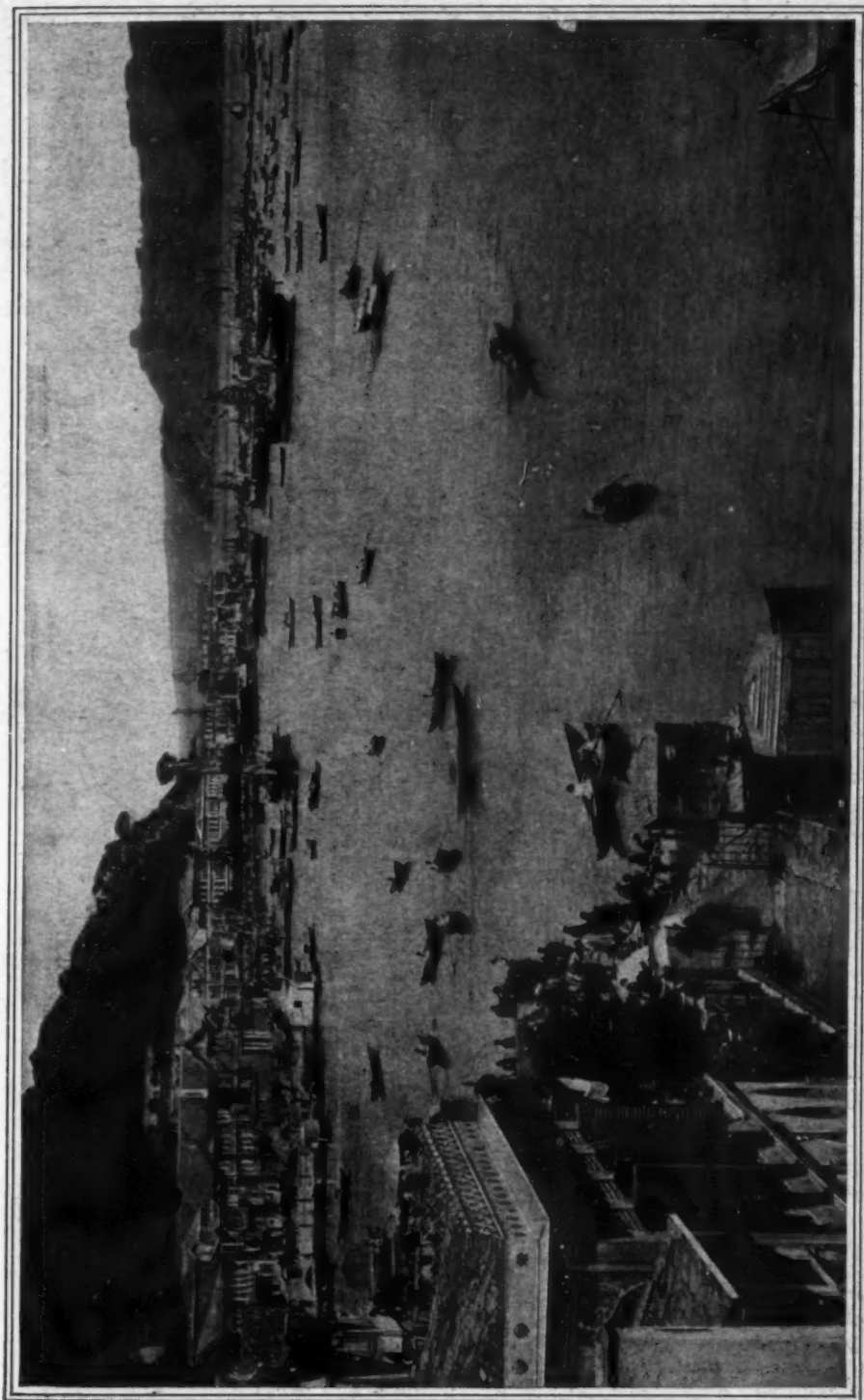
GERMANY'S GREAT DREAM OF EMPIRE

Meanwhile a remoter state was doing more to establish actual, if not formal, control than all others combined. This was Germany.

So long as Bismarck remained in power, the Berlin government disclaimed any interest in the Near Eastern problem; but William II took an entirely different attitude. Friendship for the Turk was ostentatiously avowed; Austria was encouraged in her efforts to secure access to the Aegean; a great plan of empire was laid out stretching from Hamburg and Berlin via Constantinople to Bagdad and Basra; the Bagdad Railroad was carried almost to completion; and the army, the finances, and the foreign policy of the Sultan were brought entirely under German control.

Had the Pan-German *drang nach Sudosten* been permitted to work itself out completely, the Turk would doubtless have remained the nominal possessor of the straits, but Germany would have been the authority there with which all other states would have had to deal. William II, no less than Napoleon, believed that Constantinople meant the rule of the world.

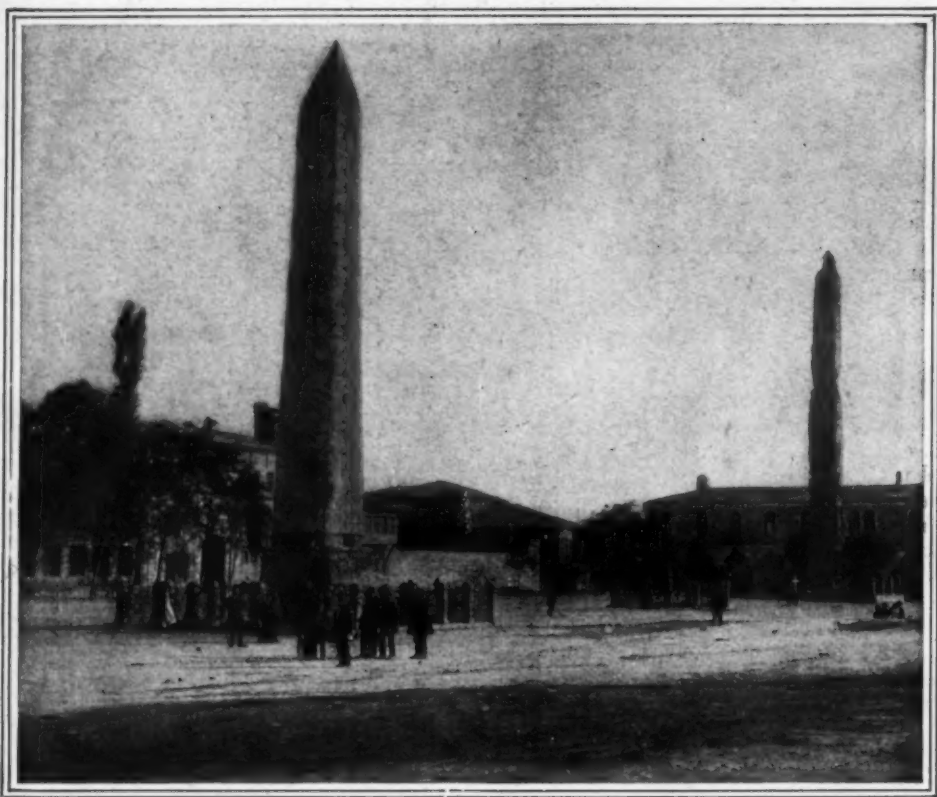
The great war—more specifically, Turkey's entrance into it—brought the long-standing issue to a head. Great Britain and France would have preferred to see the settlement go over until the Turk and his allies had been brought to their knees; but the Russians saw their advantage and pro-



SHIPPING AND BOATS ON THE BOSPORUS, THE WATERWAY CONNECTING THE SEA OF MARMORA WITH THE BLACK SEA, A STRAIT EIGHTEEN MILES LONG AND FROM HALF A MILE TO TWO MILES IN WIDTH

posed to make the most of it. Although not all of their authoritative spokesmen were agreed that the annexation of Constantinople was desirable, there was little or no dissent from the view that permanent and effective Russian control must be estab-

lishing for a general partition of the Sultan's Asiatic dominions among the three allies; and from that time until the revolution of March, 1917, the acquisition of Constantinople and the straits was steadily put forward at Petrograd, in rescripts of the Czar



THE HIPPODROME OF CONSTANTINOPLE, WITH TWO EGYPTIAN OBELISKS ERECTED BY THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE, WHO MADE THE CITY HIS CAPITAL IN THE YEAR 330

lished over the straits; and the acquisition of Constantinople itself was quite generally advocated.

The upshot was the secret tripartite agreement of March 4, 1915, by which Great Britain and France assented to Russia's annexation—in the event of a successful termination of the war—of not only Constantinople, but both the European and Asiatic shores of the Sea of Marmora and of the straits, on condition that Russia should accept certain demands of the two western powers relative to the future of other parts of Asiatic Turkey, and also of Persia. These demands were eventually defined and mutually agreed to in a series of secret conventions signed in 1916, pro-

and otherwise, as one of Russia's primary aims in the war. After the revolution the current of opinion veered, and territorial aggrandizement was openly renounced by the provisional government.

Acceptance of the program embodied in the treaties meant for both Great Britain and France, especially the former, a sharp reversal of policy. Lord Palmerston, and many another nineteenth-century worthy of Downing Street, must have turned in their graves. For three full generations a cardinal object of British diplomacy had been to keep Russia from establishing herself on the straits, lest she should use that vantage-point as a base of aggression upon British imperial interests. The fear was by

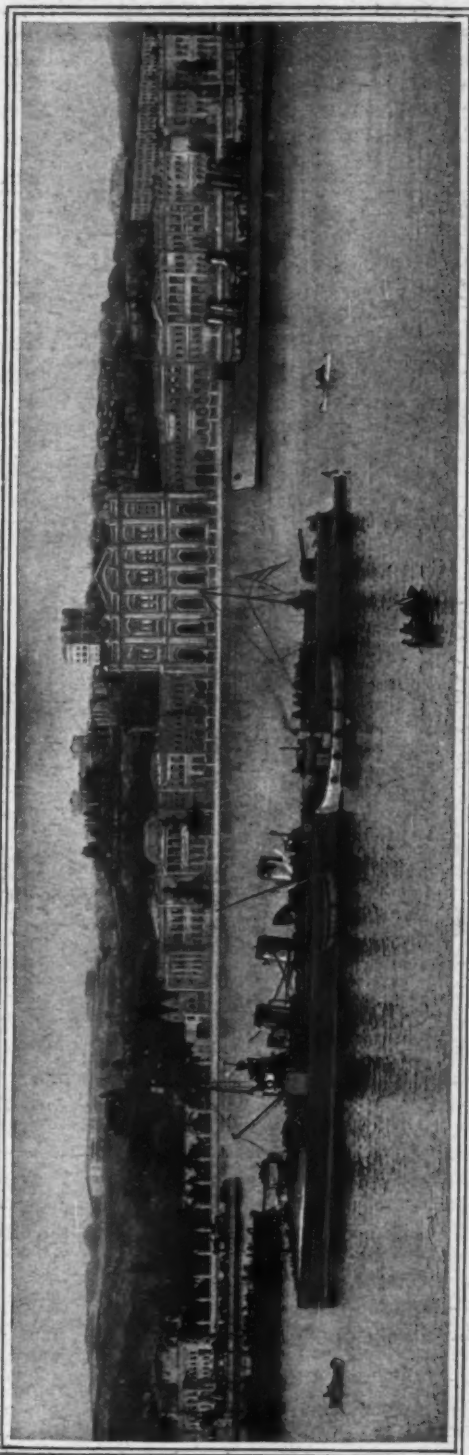
no means groundless, yet it was doubtless exaggerated, and it sometimes begot a wrong-headed policy. After the Anglo-Russian entente of 1907 it was considerably relaxed; and in 1915 necessities of war proved sufficiently urgent to cause it to be waived altogether.

The decision was supported, too, by commercial and industrial considerations. The new business intelligence of both England and France realized the material advantage of developing Russia, providing her with proper outlets, and organizing the enormous volume of her potential trade. Many European firms saw themselves rich as a result of the establishment of the Muscovite at Constantinople.

The failure of the Dardanelles campaign and the unexpected stubbornness of Turkish resistance kept the coveted territory out of Allied hands until the armistice; and the collapse of Russia not only threw the entire question into the Paris conference—as, indeed, must have happened in any case—but created a new set of conditions for its solution. Had Russia remained in the war to the end, Great Britain and France would have found their hands tied at Paris on the straits question, precisely as on Fiume and Shantung. As matters turned out, there was hardly any subject which the negotiators could take up in greater freedom from previous commitments.

The problem as it presented itself to the Peace Conference was substantially this. Assuming—as was stipulated in President Wilson's fourteen points and accepted as axiomatic by all the Allied belligerents—that the straits were to be made "permanently free to all ships," what political authority should be entrusted with responsibility for protecting and enforcing the new régime? Obviously, this involved the questions whether the Turk should continue to rule at Constantinople, and, if not, who should be his successor.

Two things were clear—first, that if the Turk were left in power,

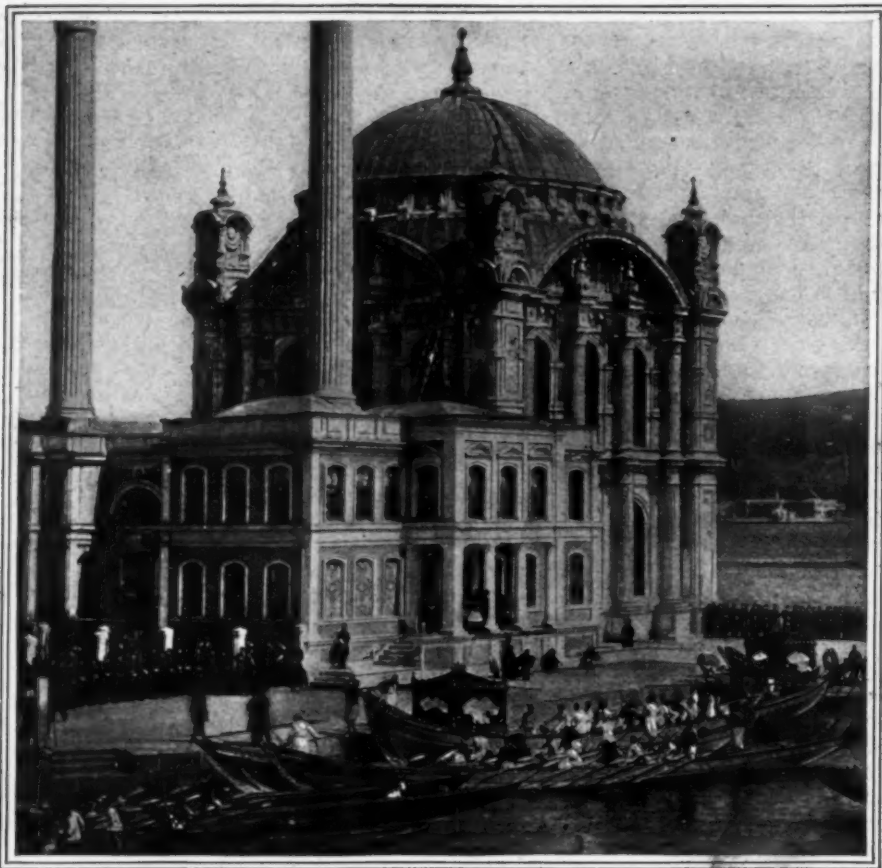


THE TCHERAGAN SERAI, ONE OF THE SEVERAL IMPERIAL PALACES ON THE SHORE OF THE BOSPORUS—LYING IN THE FOREGROUND ARE TORPEDO-BOATS OF THE ALLIED NAVIES

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

his control over the straits must be put under new restraints; second, that, however advantageously the principle of nationality might be applied in fixing the status and delimiting the frontiers of Alsace-Lorraine, Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Schleswig-Hol-

the remaining 175,000 include representatives of almost every people under the sun. The only feasible grounds on which to fix the future status of the region, therefore, are economic necessity and political stability—a circumstance which may not lighten



THE VALIDI MOSQUE, ON THE SHORE OF THE BOSPORUS, WITH TURKISH TROOPS GUARDING THE QUAY ON THE OCCASION OF A VISIT BY THE SULTAN

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

stein, it was of no avail in solving the problem of Constantinople and its environs. The motley population of the region absolutely refuses to support any claim based on considerations of race.

Roughly estimated, the area—including Constantinople—which the secret treaty of 1915 earmarked for Russia contains 1,450,000 people. Of this number, only 600,000—not forty-three per cent—are Turks. About 300,000 are Greeks, 200,000 are Armenians, 75,000 are Levantines, 70,000 are Jews, 30,000 are Bulgarians,

the present task, but which, perhaps, increases the chance of a solution that will be just and permanent.

THREE POSSIBLE SETTLEMENTS

What settlements of the problem are possible? The proposals that have come from statesmen, diplomats, and writers are legion. Speaking broadly, they can be reduced to three main plans:

First, to leave the Turks in possession, but with stronger guarantees of the rights of other peoples to use the straits.

Second, to bestow the city and its appurtenant lands upon some non-Turkish power.

Third, to neutralize the region and bring it under international control.

The first plan meets with little favor. When, early in the war, Mr. Asquith declared that the conflict must put an end to two evils, the domination of Prussian militarism and the rule of the Turk in Europe, he struck a responsive chord; and the world has had no reason to change its mind on either subject. As guardian of the straits, the Porte has been an utter failure. Its insolent action in admitting the German war-ships Goeben and Breslau into the Dardanelles in the autumn of 1914, and aiding and abetting them in their operations against states with which Turkey was not at the time at war, was but one of a long series of flagrant violations of its international engagements.

The reiterated promises of the present ministers that if Turkey is not dispossessed the straits will henceforth be open to the world without restriction are not worth the paper on which they are written. Reestablishment of Turkish sovereignty, no matter what conditions were imposed, would merely start again the wearisome round of threats, interventions, conflicts, political combinations, and wars which has centered in the straits question for seventy-five years.

The second main proposal is to turn over Constantinople and the lands immediately bordering Marmora and the straits to some Christian power, either to be annexed outright or to be administered as a free port under a national flag. Russia is, of course, the state commonly in the mind of those who support this plan; although the present condition of that country raises doubt, even in the minds of the annexationists, as to the practicability of the scheme. Some suggest that the territory should be bestowed on Greece; one or two writers have proposed that it should be placed under the rule of Belgium.

The third plan — internationalization — has been much more widely supported; indeed, public sentiment may be said to be overwhelmingly for it in all the Allied countries. If adopted, it would mean the end of exclusive domination of the straits by any one power. Instead, the waterways would be open at all times to ships of every kind and of all nations; the internationalized area would be strictly neutral in time

of war; probably fortifications and military works would be forbidden, as they now are in the Strait of Magellan.

Obviously, the success of such a régime would require the constant vigilance and active administration of some organized and powerful authority. Two main proposals here arise. One is to place the neutralized region under the jurisdiction of an international commission similar to the very useful Danube Commission created by the treaty of Paris in 1856, and to the Kongo River Commission authorized at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. The other suggestion is to entrust the region to a single power—the United States has been mentioned in this connection—to be administered under a mandate of the League of Nations.

The outcome of the mandatory plan is problematical; but, judging by the experience of the Danube Commission and of various other international agencies of the kind in the past fifty years, much might be hoped for from an international commission, providing that it were so composed as not to be dominated by powers having peculiar interests at stake. An English writer has suggested a governing board of three members, an American, a Dane, and a Swiss, chosen by the signatory powers from a body of nominees five times as numerous; and perhaps no better suggestion can be made.

What of the Sultan, if any of these newer plans is adopted? This is for the Peace Conference to say; but his continued presence at Constantinople would obviously be incompatible with either the annexationist or the internationalizationist program, and therefore, without much doubt, he will have to go, bag and baggage. With Armenia, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Arabia presumably lost, there will be only one place for him to go—to Asia Minor; and there, where six or seven million people of pure Turkish blood await reorganization under a stable government, is his logical abode. Konia, the ancient Iconium, now a principal station on the interior stretches of the Bagdad Railway, dominates the most purely Turkish sections of the country; and there, it is reasonable to expect, the new Ottoman capital will be located.

In this remote and uninviting spot the heir of the lordly Solymans and Mahmouds, shattered in prestige, shorn of his empire, and bereft of his magnificent capital, will have no lack of food for bitter reflection.

A Song of Home

BY JACQUES BELDEN

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

I THINK there is no place in the world where the wind sings out of the storm the way it sings at Shanhanarragh. When the clouds are whirling up over the marshes in thick, smoke-black drifts, and the drowning gray of the rain creeps nearer across the meadow-land, then the voice of the wind comes suddenly twisting through, in a soft, sweet melody that rises as the storm rises and dies as the storm dies, until its last note melts away in a breath, like the end of a smile.

Around the age-worn house they call Castle Hanarragh the song is strangest and sweetest of all. In the tower-room, where half the stones hang loose in the walls, and the wooden rafters are old and rotting, and the high, narrow windows stand open to the bare sky, a man can sit and listen to music of which he has never heard the like—listen as long as it will ever last, and not grow tired.

Old Keirle O'Dare says so, and I think he knows. No matter how or when the storm begins, he is always there, and he sits and listens as if to a voice he loves, and never goes away until the last low note has softened into silence.

Keirle O'Dare! Lord of Castle Hanarragh, they called him, although he is no more a lord than the old stone house on the hill at Shanhanarragh is a castle. But with all of that they named him well, for he had a lordly way with him when he was young, a way that made men tremble and grow pale and yet at the same time be glad to do his will.

He was descended, he said, from the O'Dares of Keenlanarran—from the long line of proud, hard old soldiers who had lived so fast and fought so easily and died so gladly that at last there was only one left to bear the name. And that one was Keirle O'Dare himself—a younger son of a younger son, yet none the less one of

them, and as proud and brave as they. His father and his father's father had dwelt at Shanhanarragh, and so he dwelt there, too, and when he married a little stormy-eyed girl from the west it was to Castle Hanarragh that he brought her home.

There she lived a year, and her eyes and the storms that came out of the marshlands were of the same color, and changed with the same swift fearsomeness, and Keirle O'Dare was happy. At the end of the year she died.

A wretched man was Keirle O'Dare when he saw her die. Yet even in his wretchedness the spirit of the O'Dares within him flamed into joy. For the baby she had died to give him was a boy—with the straight, clean limbs and the fighting mouth of his fathers—a boy to carry the line of heroes farther on through the ages of the world. So Keirle wept and smiled, and called his son Dare O'Dare, after the first who had ever borne the name.

It is easy to imagine how young Dare O'Dare grew up at Shanhanarragh. Child of a wild race of riotous fighters, son of a wild and riotous father, who left him alone for months together while he rode off to God knows what adventures in the west country, young lord of Castle Hanarragh, with none to curb his will or teach him gentleness or care for him, without even a memory of the mother who had breathed once to show him how and then had breathed no more, and with no path to follow except that path the O'Dares had worn—how could he grow into anything but another of the old, wild stock?

Well! He was as different from the old, wild stock as southern sunshine is from the cloud-haunted daylight of the north.

'Tis true he had their looks—the straight mouth and chin, the heavy eyebrows and lashes, the black, black hair—and he had their furious frown, too, when he was puz-

zled or hurt. But wait until he'd turn his black-gray eyes on you, and then you'd see the difference. The light of them, the colors of them, the golden dreams of them, would be like something you've maybe seen in some place far off, where music and love and laughter live, but never before up there in the marshes where people hate and fight and die.

And he'd smile—he'd smile the wonderfulest way—like a summer sunrise that will warm the grayest landscape into a glow of joy. Once you'd seen him do that, you'd never wonder at all to find him so quiet and soft-spoken, always readier to laugh than to quarrel, and friendly with all, whether they dwelt in Shanhanarragh or only happened to pass that way.

With all the swearing and cursing he'd heard about him from the day he was born, never a word of it did his lips learn to echo, and with all the fighting and carousing Keirle and his crowd did there and roundabout, never once did the boy try to follow in their way. But the things he chose to do were things he could hardly have heard of, unless out of books; and how he came to know them, and to want them—well, that's a mystery the like of a miracle.

A few years he went to school in Bal-marcham, and it was there that somebody gave him the violin and taught him something of how to play it. After once he'd begun, it was only a short while before he knew its ways and its voice better than ever his teacher had known or dreamed of knowing; and presently he cared for nothing else. The tower-room at Castle Hanarragh was his, and it's there he'd sit for hours together, calling the music out of the strings and hearing it come to his call, and learning the meaning of happiness, I have no doubt.

A bitter day it was for Keirle O'Dare when he knew at last the kind of son he had fathered. In seventeen years he had not learned it, for he was a fierce man and masterful, and could not think that any would go against his will, surely not his own son. What hadn't he done for him? He had given him horses and firearms, and taught him to ride and to shoot, and he had even talked to him sometimes, though he'd never listened for the answer. But a day had to come at last when he heard, for the hundredth time, the soft song of the violin, and, hearing it, realized all of a

sudden how 'twas inside that little wooden box with the strings across it that his boy's heart lay, and not in the free air of the riding or the fury of the battle, where the name of O'Dare is a terror and a wonder to this hour.

Just how he felt at first I don't know, or how long he swore and cursed and smashed things in his house before he grew calm enough to speak so one could understand him. But the end and last of it was, I know, that when he'd told young Dare O'Dare in forty different kinds of damnation what an unholy error of a son he was, and when he'd ordered him, in his furious voice that well-nigh shook the stone walls apart, to burn his violin to ashes in the fireplace, then Dare O'Dare stood up before him as no other man of Shanhanarragh had ever had courage to, and said:

"If it's the violin or me must go, father, then it's myself that goes," and never another word.

And when old Keirle drew in his breath for another blast of the curses he'd been learning those fifty years long, the boy just shoved the fiddle under his arm, and off down the way he went, with only the clothes he wore and the little money in his pocket that Darrel Rohane, the servant in the stable, ran after him to slip into his hand.

A storm was on them that day—near always there's a storm at Shanhanarragh—but Dare O'Dare walked down through the village and out to the open road, with never a fear in his face or a look behind him. His father stood in the gateway at Castle Hanarragh, cursing him fit to frighten the angels in heaven, but all the time with a terror and an ache in his own heart that you could almost see with your eyes.

II

So that was the way the boy went. And when he was gone, Keirle O'Dare lived there by himself in the old house, and fifteen years passed by. In all that time never a word came from the son—never a word of whether he died along the road in the storm, or, if not, where he went to and what he did.

Strangers came and went in Shanhanarragh more and more, for the miracle they call the motor-car kept bringing them, and there was no turning them away. But of all the strangers, never a one could speak a word of Dare O'Dare, until finally Darrel



HE TOLD YOUNG O'DARE IN FORTY DIFFERENT KINDS OF DAMNATION WHAT
AN UNHOLY ERROR OF A SON HE WAS

Rohane and the others were weary and out of heart with asking, though they never stopped.

Keirle O'Dare grew old and rheumatic, in the years, and bitterly he lamented that he had not died in battle or in debauch, like so many of his race. The laws got sharper, too, what with the motor-cars running in and out among the hills and marshes, and he could not have ridden and rioted as he was used, even if he had kept his strength. So he came to sit at home

alone, often listening to the storms, and cursing over the fire, and thinking of no man knew what.

So time turned over the pages until it brought old Keirle into one wild day in the March of 1916. Sitting by the fire that day, he cursed in every way he had ever learned the fate that had brought the great war too late for him. With a blasphemous heart he sorrowed—not because the world was torn and bleeding, but because he was too old and worn to help in

the tearing and the bloodshed, and because no man of the O'Dares was left to take his place. Not once in all his wicked talk did he mention his son, yet I have no doubt 'twas over the thought of him and what he might have been that the old man's soul was twisted and racked.

It had come along to that time of the afternoon when the daylight is nearly worn out, and the dark fingers of night were beginning to stretch over Castle Hanarragh, when a little motor-car crawled up the hill and stopped just by the gate. Out of it, as if he had been some guest they were expecting, there stepped a man—a tall man with hair the color of daffodils, and a happy, smiling face. He carried a big, square box with a rubber cover over it, and, carrying it, he walked into the room where the fire blazed before Keirle O'Dare.

"An' who are you?" said Keirle, looking up with a frown as hard as the very stones his house was built of.

"Me?" said the man, answering the frown with the cheerfulest smile that room had ever seen. "I'm Tom Cross, and I've come direct from America, by way of London and Dublin." And he put the box on the table and wrung the drops of rain from off his face and hands.

"Well, whoever you may be, come up to the fire and dry yourself, then," said Keirle O'Dare. "But tell me at once what you will be wanting with me."

For he was always dreaming, was Keirle, that one day they'd be sending for him to come and fight in the great war, though well he knew they never would.

"Well, I'll tell you at once," said Tom Cross, and glad he was to sit down before the blaze; "for I can see you're no man to trifle with. I've come here to sell you a phonograph—something you will surely want in this lonely place. A phonograph, you know," he went on, for Keirle kept as silent as a frozen stream, and Tom Cross got thinking maybe he did not understand, "a phonograph is a very wonderful machine. It will reproduce for you the music of all the great artists—artists of the voice, the piano, the violin—"

He stopped, for the fire flamed up and showed him Keirle's face, twisted and knotted with anger.

"Music!" said Keirle, and his voice was buried deep in his throat. "Artists! Violin!" And he broke off with a choking and a gasping.

"Sure!" said Tom Cross, but startled he was for all his laughing way. "Why not?"

In a minute or two the old man managed to swallow down whatever it had been in his throat to choke him, and then he spoke in a voice deadly quiet.

"There is never a one of them," said Keirle O'Dare, "never a one of those you call artists, that spend their good lives with this moonstruck music stuff—there's never a one of them, I say, but what's a black curse to his country and to the father that bore him. Can they ride?" he cried out, sudden and loud. "Can they fight? Will they go into the wars and strike and kill like men? They will not! They're no men at all. They're nothing. Nothing!" he ended, in almost a whisper.

He said all this like a man that knows it well, but of course he had no knowledge of the ways of musicians. Because his son had been the like of that, he'd swear they were all the same. That was the way of Keirle O'Dare.

Tom Cross sat there a minute, studying the old man, and then he said, easy and calm, as if 'twas little account to him one way or the other:

"I have heard that some of them are different."

"You've heard? A lie!" cried the old man.

"Maybe not a lie," said Tom Cross, same as he'd spoken before. "Only the day I left London we got the news about André Delmour."

"And what of this André Delmour?" old Keirle cried, full of fury at being contradicted. "Who is he, then?"

"Who is he?" exclaimed Tom Cross. "Oh, my dear sir, a man that owned a phonograph would never have to ask that question. André Delmour," he said, and a queer way he said it, something like speaking a piece you've learned from a book, "is one of the greatest violinists of modern times. He first attracted attention in the year 1908, when he played, at a concert in London, a little interlude of his own composing called 'A Song of Home.' A great impresario happened to be in the audience, and in an ecstasy of delight he summoned the young violinist and engaged him on the spot. From that moment André Delmour rose rapidly, until in 1912, when he made his tour of England, France, and America, he was acclaimed as one of the world's greatest virtuosos. His fame

was thereafter secure, both as composer and player. His first composition, his 'Song of Home,' is perhaps the most popular. Although he has played it hundreds of times, it is said that he never plays it

"Well, and what is all that? Bah! The same old tale!"

"Wait!" said Tom Cross, and now he spoke not out of a book, but out of his own heart, as a good man should. "I've heard

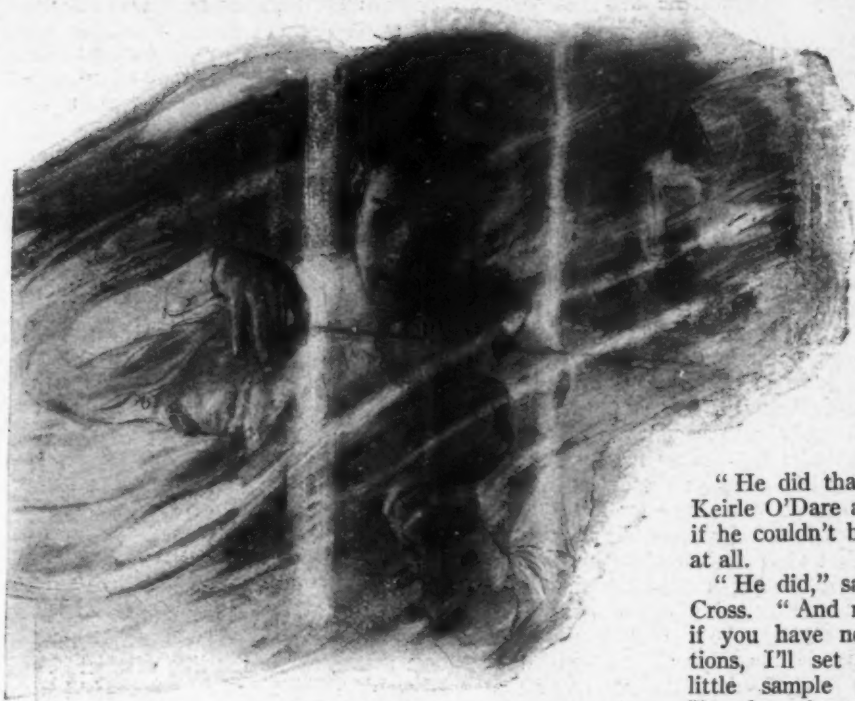


"WHO WOULD THERE EVER BE IN THE WORLD WITH A VIOLIN TO TAME THE WIND AND MAKE OUT OF IT A SONG OF HOME, EXCEPT ONLY DARE O'DARE?"

twice alike, always introducing some slight variation which adds to its beauty."

Just for breath he stopped, and old Keirle stormed out:

him. I've heard him twice. Generally I don't feel much, but when he played 'A Song of Home,' I knew what music ought to mean. Well, he was in London when



"He did that?" said Keirle O'Dare again, as if he couldn't believe it at all.

"He did," said Tom Cross. "And now, sir, if you have no objections, I'll set up this little sample machine I've brought to show

the war broke out. He'd signed for a big concert tour around the world. Thousands of pounds were waiting for him. And what did he do? Chucked it all over like water, he did, and went and joined up—joined up as a private soldier."

"He did that?" said Keirle O'Dare, and why he shivered I don't know.

"He did," said Tom, "and he went to the front. And he kept in the middle of the fighting, and was cited for bravery, and got crosses and medals so fast that it might have been snowing them. He was promoted and wounded and promoted again, until only last month they made him a major. I've heard, too, that he had his violin with him, and would play for the boys whenever he got a chance. They always asked for 'A Song of Home'—especially the wounded; and I've heard the way he played it in camp or in the hospital was better than he'd ever done on the stage. He composed some, too. He sent back one piece, 'The Song of the Shells,' that somebody played before the king in London, and the papers all raved over it. The only thing it needed to make it perfect, they said, was to have him come home and play it himself."

you, and let you hear an exact reproduction of 'A Song of Home,' as played by the great violinist, André Delmour."

III

He slipped the cover off the box and set the phonograph up on the table. Through the dark that had grown around them old Keirle stared at the thing, but never a word did he say. A twist of the hand and 'twas all ready, and then Tom Cross started it off and went back to his chair by the fireside.

For a second or two there was no kind of sound in the air except just that sighing and sobbing a phonograph always begins with, as if it's telling you how sorry it is it can't do better. Then, quick and clear and soft, came a few piano chords with spaces of stillness between them. Chords that called you, they were—just called you and stopped.

Quite gone was the last echo of the last one of them before the voice of the violin began to sing.

"A Song of Home"! Is there any one alive that's heard it and forgotten, or ever will forget? Oh, the golden dream of the soul of you, André Delmour! Oh, the

miracle and glory of the song of your violin!

Tom Cross sat back with the glow of the fire upon him, warm and content and smiling, his eyes half shut; but Keirle O'Dare, the hard shadows hiding his face, sat up straight, waiting and frowning, till the first notes came to him.

Sweet and strange those first notes are, and very soft, like the beginning of a little wind away off by the far hills' edges. And out of them rises a melody, all vague and wandering, half lost—a melody, men say, that brings you close to remembering dear, gone things you've loved and forgotten. Little by little it changes then, the way you'd hardly know 'twas changing, till all at once it swells in upon you like a sudden great rush of rain coming from over the marshes, and bringing you know not what, and all to throw down at your feet.

When he heard that, old Keirle moved for the first time and drew in his breath sharp, as if a sting was in the throat of him. But before he could speak or breathe again, the song turned wild, the way it does, and raged, and broke with the desperate crash that's in it—and never the like of it in music before. Then Keirle O'Dare gave a hoarse cry and lifted his arms above his head, and his eyes flamed like lightning in the darkness.

Tom Cross sprang to his feet and caught the old man in his hold.

"What's happened? What is it?" he said.

"'Tis my son!" cried the old man, struggling. "'Tis the voice of my son!"

"No, no, it's only a music-box," said Tom Cross, pretending to laugh.

But Keirle flung him away with a strength he'd not known for years.

"Listen!" he cried. "'Tis the song of the storm above Shanhanarragh. I've heard it my life long here—how should I not know it now? Oh, many's the day I've heard Dare O'Dare trying to prison it in his violin!"

He caught Tom Cross by the arm and dragged him to the stairs.

"Come up!" he shouted. "Come up to the tower and hear it once, and then tell me if I lie."

Tom Cross—and a brave man he was in that hour—just smiled and went up to the tower. Up the age-worn stairs he went, with Keirle O'Dare, mad and raving and pulling him by the arm.

Once in the tower-room, where the windows stand open to the sky, the old man hushed all of a sudden and loosed his hold and stood there with his finger on his lip. Tom stood silent, too, and listened, and the wind sang through the storm the way it always sings at Shanhanarragh.

Tom says he'd never believed there could happen anything so strange, not even in Ireland.

For the song of the wind, up there among the loose-hanging walls and the rain-drowned trees, was the very voice and melody he'd heard only a moment before coming from that phonograph box below stairs, the very voice and melody of André Delmour's violin and his "Song of Home." He's a man of few fancies, is Tom Cross, yet he swears 'twas so.

The old man watched him listening, and saw his cheek grow pale and his smile fade out for the first time since he came; and he laughed, did Keirle O'Dare.

"'Tis true! You'll not deny 'tis true!" he cried. "Ah, there's no other place in the whole world where the wind in the storm makes music the like of this! And who would there ever be in the world with a violin to tame the wind and make out of it a song of home, except only Dare O'Dare, son of Keirle O'Dare of Castle Hanarragh?"

"He was not afraid to fight!" cried Keirle. "Music he made when 'twas music time; but when fighting time came, then only the noise of the battle was music to him. I beg his forgiveness," the old man went on, a great glow of joy in his eyes. "I misjudged him, and I beg his forgiveness. 'Tis not too late! You know where he is this hour, and it's you will take me there to the battle-fields to find him."

He stood then, gasping for breath, and a coldness came over Tom Cross. He moved back near the stairs as if he was frightened.

"Look here," said Tom Cross, and of a sudden his way of speech grew strange and craftylike, as if he was trying to persuade Keirle O'Dare back into anger against his son once more. "If André Delmour is really your son, look how he's treated you. He's thrown aside your name—the old, old name you're so proud of." He watched the old man's face as he said it, to see if it would not cut him. "And more than that, he's forgotten and neglected you in

all the honor and prosperity that's come upon him. Would you forgive him that?" demanded Tom Cross, anxious, as if it mattered to him.

"Forgive him, do you say?" cried Keirle O'Dare, and at the sob and the rapture in the voice of him the heart of Tom Cross sank like an icy weight in his breast. "Would he be Dare O'Dare if he'd kept his father's name, once his father had cursed him and cast him off? Or, with the fighting soul of his race inside him—and it is there, now I know it is there!—would he be coming back to me to show the honor and the glory he'd won by his violin, the same time he could remember the way his violin and all the wonders he could work with it were a horror and a damnation to me? He would not! He could not! Man, you come from the great, rich land of the west, and you do not understand. But we know—Dare O'Dare and I."

Tom Cross did not answer.

"He has suffered and sorrowed for Castle Hanarragh and me," moaned Keirle. "Can you not hear his sorrowing there in the 'Song of Home'? Many's the day his heart has been racked with the longing to feel the rain and the wind of Shanhanarragh against his face, and to hear the voice of his father calling him Dare O'Dare. But how could he ever come back at all, without first I'd go to him and beg his forgiveness and tell him I was wrong? You *will* take me where I can find him!" cried the old man again, in the voice that he had used so many years to make other men do his bidding.

"Wait—wait till I tell you," said Tom Cross, hesitating.

"Wait, is it?" urged Keirle. "No, no! Take me where he is. You will take me?" he pleaded, and 'twas a new thing, indeed,

to hear the lord of Castle Hanarragh plead with any man.

"Hush, now," said Tom Cross, and a very sober face was on him then. "Hush till we're back by the fire, and I'll tell you."

And old Keirle went with him like a child, and all the time the wind in the storm and the fiddle in the box singing the "Song of Home" together, and none to say which was which.

By the fire once more, Tom Cross just said, simple enough:

"I told you, sir, that only the day I left London we got news of André Delmour."

"The news that he'd been made a major!" cried the old man, eager and happy.

Tom shook his head.

"The news that he was killed," he said.

For a minute Keirle O'Dare sat up straight in his chair, the great eyes of him staring out of the white of his face at Tom Cross.

"Is it killed?" he said at last. "Is it killed? And him Dare O'Dare—my son!"

"I'm sorry," said Tom Cross; for 'twas all he could think to say.

IV

If you should go now up there into the marsh country, folk would point to Keirle O'Dare for a man whose wits are gone. 'Tis wandering and wild he must be, they'd tell you, for he sits all day alone, with hardly a word for any one who comes by. Always in a storm he'll be up in the tower-room—the room that was Dare O'Dare's fifteen years and more ago—listening to the song of the wind over Shanhanarragh. And when there's no storm to comfort him, then 'tis the little square box of a phonograph he'll set up on the table, and over and over again he'll listen to "A Song of Home."

A TWILIGHT VISION

As soft as in a dream
To me you came;
Out of the dusk I heard
You call my name.

So swiftly did you go
I did not hear;
I only turned to see
That grief stood near.

Harold Vinal

Rudyard Kipling and His Place in Literature

THE ACHIEVEMENT AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A MANY-SIDED GENIUS WHO HAS BEEN A PANEGYRIST OF PATRIOTISM AND A POET OF EMPIRE, AND WHO IS ALSO A MOUTHPIECE OF AMERICA AS WELL AS OF BRITAIN

By Richard Le Gallienne

HENRY JAMES, in an early appreciation of Rudyard Kipling's writings, which was a striking illustration of his own literary catholicity, referred to "the particular property that made us all so precipitately drop everything else to attend to him." The phrase is vividly and truthfully descriptive of the manner in which, so to say, Mr. Kipling first hit literary London; for his sudden and swift arrival was a very unmistakable jolt to the literary fashions then prevailing.

The times were decidedly "precious." We were in the midst of a rather hectic aftermath of Preraphaelitism and the "esthetic" movement. The labels "decadent" and "*fin de siècle*" were the prevailing catchwords, and "strange sins," and peculiar "soul-states," and "artistic temperaments" were in vogue. It was the heyday of Oscar Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley, of Paterian and Stevensonian prose. "Style" and "distinction" were our only wear. Also the cults of the poster, the music-hall, and the short story were at their height. The *Yellow Book* was being published in Vigo Street, and the Rimers' Club was meeting at the Cheshire Cheese. In short, it was the eighteen-nineties.

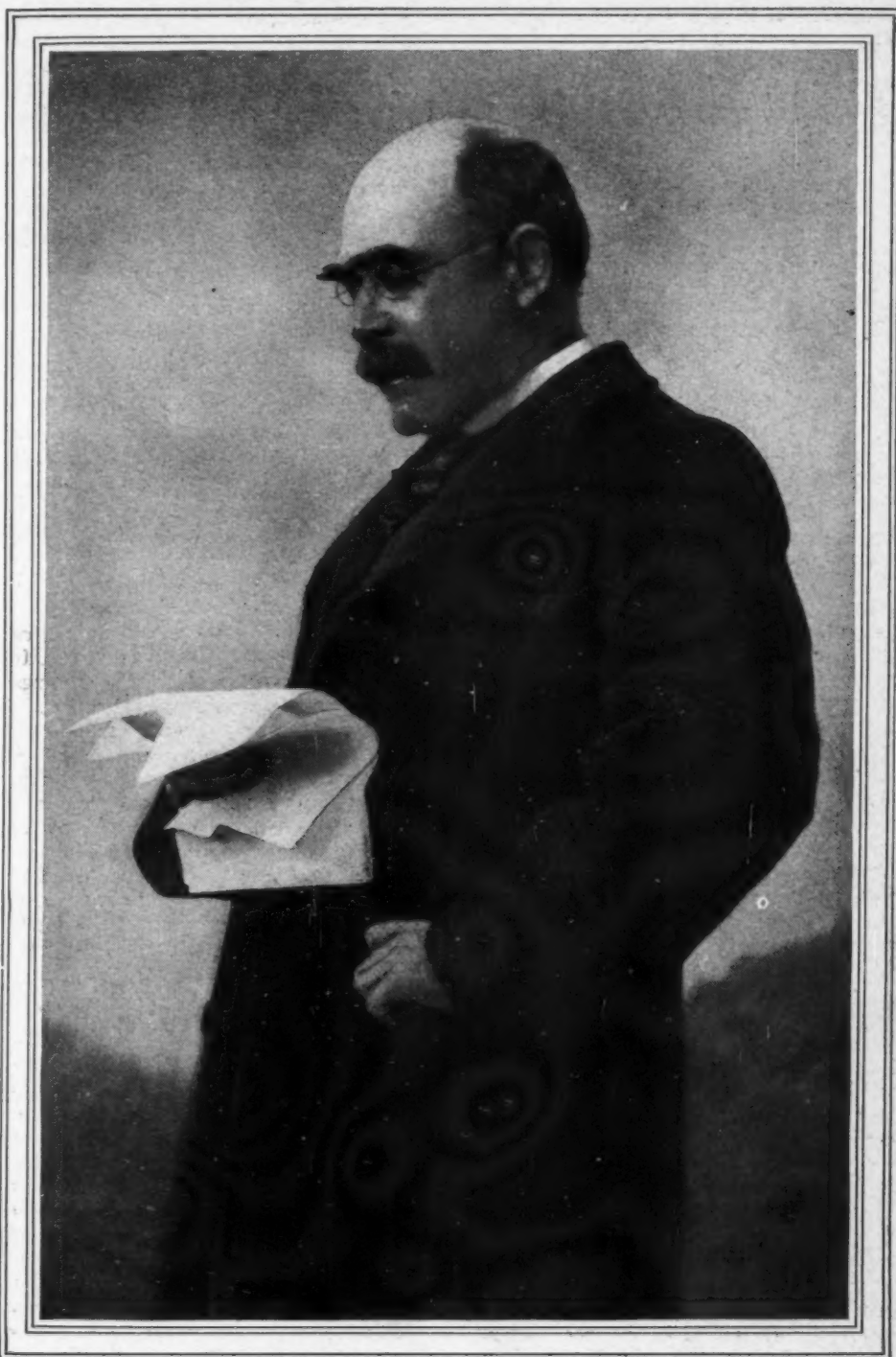
It is not necessary to depreciate those stirring times, as surely I would be the last to do, in order to emphasize the singularity of Mr. Kipling's paradoxical arrival among them. There was a genuine artistic vitality in them, which has not only left behind some notable work, becoming more seriously recognized as time goes on, and the picturesque memories of certain ill-starred men of talent, if not genius, but which is, at the moment, perhaps too potently alive and

influential in that new wave of "preciousness" wherein we are at present engulfed. Indeed, the despised and rejected of the eighteen-nineties have become, it is to be feared, almost too much the chief corner-stones of contemporary movements and manifestoes.

However, "that," as Mr. Kipling first taught us to say, "is another story." Mr. Kipling's influence has had a long innings. If those influences which he temporarily overwhelmed are now to have theirs—well, it takes all sorts to make a world. Of one thing we may be gladly certain—the iron and quinin with which he has so plentifully dosed us will remain in the blood of the younger generation, and will serve to correct any threatened fevers of luxurious "hedonism." No recent writer can so confidently apply Whitman's words to himself, in addressing his contemporaries, and say:

You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,
But I will be good health to you, nevertheless,
And filter and fiber your blood.

Leaving artistic considerations aside for a moment, Mr. Kipling's moral influence on his day and generation has been of an importance which it is scarcely an exaggeration to call prophetic. Few writers have ever come so precisely in the nick of time. If a voice crying "England hath need of thee" had summoned him, he could not have been more pat to the occasion. Wordsworth's "stern daughter of the voice of God" has seldom been in greater need of a candid friend and servant. But how whimsically characteristic of the times it was, too, that that mouthpiece of the ancient verities should come in the guise of an



RUDYARD KIPLING, POET OF PATRIOTISM, PREACHER OF DUTY AND DISCIPLINE, AND MOUTHPIECE
OF THE BEST SPIRIT OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING RACES

From a recent photograph—Copyrighted by the International Film Service, New York

Anglo-Indian teller of tales, the banjo-minstrel of Tommy Atkins and *Supi-yaw-lat!*

And surely, at first, no one dreamed what this cock-sure *enfant terrible* was to mean to the British Empire in particular, and to the morale of the world in general. His guise was certainly anything but prophetic, and his accents anything but reverential. Other-worldliness—of which he has essentially a great deal—was the last quality you would attribute to him. On the contrary, a queerly acrid worldliness, an omniscient cynicism, and a jarring brutality, made the peculiar tang of this strange, new fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. One's first reading of him was like one's first experience with olives. Some people never learn to like olives, and some people—lovers, too, of the best in literature—have never quite learned to like Rudyard Kipling. There is something in him that still frightens them.

MORE THAN A TELLER OF TALES

But the fruit that Mr. Kipling brought us, even in that first astonishing volume of "Plain Tales from the Hills," was more subtly blended in flavor than any olive. It had, indeed, every kind of flavor, and was not without an odd touch of the nectarine. Among all his other experiences, its author had not missed the honey of Preraphaelitism, was not unacquainted with the *Lady Lilith*, and could put Rossetti's "Song of the Bower" into the mouth of his drunken acquaintance, *McIntosh Jellaludin*. And, while on one page we would find him lyrically celebrating "the hunting of man," what exquisite tenderness we would find on another—lover tenderness, mother tenderness—and what noble and touching pity for the sorrows and frailties of his fellows! With all his uncanny and precocious knowledge of the world—so many different worlds—his somewhat overdone and distasteful knowingness, and along with his apparent cold-bloodedness of observation and accent, there went, in unaccustomed association, so deep a sense of the tears in mortal things that one soon realized that here was something more than a diabolically clever teller of tales, and that, in fact, we were safe in the hands of a deep and serious poet.

As a matter of fact, with a precocity paralleled in nineteenth-century literature only by that of the young Charles Dickens, Mr. Kipling had for some time enjoyed a considerable reputation as, so to say, the "Boz" of Anglo-India. He had been sub-

editor of the *Lahore Civil and Military Gazette* at the early age of seventeen. Many of the "Plain Tales" were already familiar to readers of that journal long before they set the Thames on fire, as was much of the satirical verse later published as "Departmental Ditties." Six slender paper-covered volumes of "Wheeler's Railway Library," which had been published at Allahabad at a rupee apiece—at present, in the estimation of collectors, worth their weight in gold—had contained such masterpieces as "Soldiers Three," "The Story of the Gadsbys," "In Black and White," "Under the Deodars," "The Phantom 'Rickshaw," and "Wee Willie Winkie." And their author was not yet twenty-four!

Such was the considerable literary baggage which had preceded him to England, when he arrived there, to find himself famous, in 1889. On his way there, at the end of two years' holiday travel through India, China, Japan, and America, he had written sketches of his journey for his Indian papers, the *Civil and Military Gazette* and the *Pioneer*, and these sketches were afterward published under the title of "From Sea to Sea." Though Mr. Kipling deprecated their book publication, his readers will scarcely share his regret; for, apart from their intrinsic merit as picturesque pieces of observation, they provide many interesting side-lights on his imaginative writings.

THE MAKING OF "MANDALAY"

Occasionally, indeed, they have the value of raw material, which one is able to compare with the subsequent artistic product. This is particularly the case with Mr. Kipling's notes on his visit to Burma. Here is a quotation, the significance of which the reader will not be long in grasping:

Now we are lying off Moulmein in a new steamer which does not seem to run anywhere in particular. Why we should go to Moulmein is a mystery. . . . Moulmein is situated up the mouth of a river which ought to flow through South America, and all manner of dissolute native craft appear to make the place their home. . . . Strictly in confidence I will tell you that Moulmein is not a city of this earth at all. *Sindbad the Sailor* visited it, if you recollect, on that memorable voyage when he discovered the burial-ground of the elephants.

As the steamer came up the river we were aware of first one elephant and then another hard at work in timber-yards that faced the shore. . . . There was a strong scent of freshly sawn teak in the air—we could not see any elephants sawing—and occasionally the warm stillness was broken

by the crash of the log. . . . We saw upon a hill a large white pagoda surrounded by scores of little pagodas. . . . I should better remember what that pagoda was like had I not fallen deeply and irrevocably in love with a Burmese girl at the foot of the first flight of steps. Only the fact of the steamer starting next noon prevented me from staying at Moulmein forever and owning a pair of elephants.

Leaving this far too lovely maiden, I went up the steps only a few yards, and, turning me round, looked upon a view of water, island, broad river, fair grazing-ground, and belted wood that made me rejoice that I was alive. . . . Far above my head was a faint tinkle, as of golden bells, and a talking of breezes in the tops of the toddy-palms.

And now, of course, we have all the material ready for the alchemic "projection" into—

By the old Moulmein pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a settin', an' I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!"

Seldom is it possible in so interesting a fashion to place a masterpiece side by side with the material out of which it grew, and watch the transmutation, so to say, in process, as in the case of this most magical of all Mr. Kipling's poems—"Mandalay." Of course, the watching gives us no clue to the process. The magic remains magic. We see the waving of the wand—as in the case of Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," mysteriously created from the note of another Oriental traveler—but that is all. How it has waved a piece of average good descriptive prose into a poem to haunt us forever remains pure necromancy.

I don't think we have had any literary excitement since to compare with the thrill of the first appearance of the "Barrack-Room Ballads," as they were published in W. E. Henley's somewhat truculent but very alive and distinguished weekly, the *Scots Observer*—afterward called the *National Observer*. To have read "Mandalay" there for the first time is something worth remembering, and "Danny Deever" and the "Bolivar," and all the rest—for a while, a masterpiece each week to look forward to.

TEN AMAZINGLY FERTILE YEARS

The publication of the ballads in volume form, in 1892, immediately gave Mr. Kipling a second world-wide fame as a poet. In addition to confirming him as the min-

strel of the British soldier, it introduced him as a singer of sailors' chanteys, too—chanteys of the engine-room, in particular—one of his interests to find its most notable expression a little later in "McAndrew's Hymn." Also, such poems as "The Flag of England" and "East and West" gave him the position he has ever since held of unofficial laureate to the British Empire—a position finally sealed as his by that solemn national hymn, the "Recessional," first published in the *London Times*, on July 17, 1897, on the occasion of Queen Victoria's second jubilee.

He was still in his thirty-second year, and in the interval between the "Recessional" and the publication of "Barrack-Room Ballads" he had achieved a third variety of fame by his "Jungle Book" (1894) and "Second Jungle Book" (1895), a double series of mystica, beast-stories, which, after his manner, had been foreshadowed by the strangely fascinating story, "In the Rukh," published in the collection of "Many Inventions" (1893). In 1891 "The Light That Failed," his only book in the conventional form of a novel, had revealed his power from another angle, and provided an actor of genius, Sir William Forbes Robertson, with one of his finest rôles.

Other products of that amazingly fertile ten years were "The Seven Seas" (1896), one of his finest volumes of poems; "Captains Courageous" (1897), "The Day's Work" (1898), "Stalky & Co.," a story reminiscent of his own school-days (1899), and "Kim," by some considered the high-water mark of his genius, a deep and tender romance of an old Hindu sage, in 1901. When "Kim" was published, it was barely twelve years since Mr. Kipling's landing in England, fourteen since the English publication of "Plain Tales from the Hills." It was an amazing record, both for the average quality and for the variety of its achievement. There was not a dead spot in it. On the contrary, it was alive with surprising new departures all through, and no single one of these various volumes had failed to give evidence of its author's genius and to enrich his readers with some memorable piece of work, with its own unforgettable, characteristic stamp upon it. It had revealed to us many Kiplings. We might like one more than another, but each one was a masterful individual, very much himself and no one else.

For the last fifteen years—"the years

between"—Mr. Kipling would seem, for the most part, to have been resting upon his laurels, as, after such a record, he surely has every right to do; preoccupied with the bringing up of his children and with his duties as a citizen. For those children, and everybody else's children, he has written "Just So Stories" (1902), "Puck of Pook's Hill" (1906), and "Rewards and Fairies" (1910); and from time to time he has made challenging poetic comment on British affairs and the trend of political events generally. Through ballad and folk-lore and fairy tale he has been teaching his children the sweetness of English soil and the greatness of English history and character:

Take of English earth as much
As either hand may rightly clutch.
In the taking of it breathe
Prayer for all who lie beneath—
Not the great or well-bespoke,
But the mere uncounted folk
Of whose life and death is none
Report or lamentation.
Lay that earth upon thy heart,
And thy sickness shall depart.

He has been doing the same for colonial and Anglo-American grown-ups in such poems as this, "The Recall," the epilogue to the significant story, "An Habitation Enforced," in "Actions and Reactions" (1909):

I am the land of their fathers,
In me the virtue stays;
I will bring back my children,
After certain days.

Under their feet in the grasses
My clinging magic runs;
They shall return as strangers,
They shall remain as sons.

Over their heads in the branches
Of the new-bought, ancient trees,
I weave an incantation,
And draw them to my knees.

Scent of smoke in the evening,
Smell of rain in the night,
The hours, the days, and the seasons
Order their souls aright;

Till I make plain the meaning
Of all my thousand years—
Till I fill their hearts with knowledge,
While I fill their eyes with tears.

It need hardly be said that one of the first notes to be struck by Mr. Kipling, a note that has reverberated as from an iron string through all his subsequent writings, has been that an Englishman's first duty is his duty to England. "Keep we the faith!" From first to last he has been an incorrigible

Britisher, and in his case there seems never to have been a shadow of those Gilbertian temptations to belong to other nations. Least of all has he ever shown the smallest inclination to be an internationalist. In that famous envoy to "The Seven Seas," in which he expresses his creed as an artist, he has told us that in the happy hereafter for artists, "when the oldest colors have faded and the youngest critic has died"—

Only the Master shall praise us, and only
the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one
shall work for fame;
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in
his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of
Things as They Are!

From first to last the god he has served, with a prayerful devotion which gives all his work a curious seriousness, even solemnity, has been the God of Things as They Are; and, when you come to think of it, what other God is there? Under another name, such was the deity of another modern writer who seems very different from Mr. Kipling, but from whom, I conjecture, he has drawn no little inspiration—George Meredith. "Sacred Reality," Meredith called his divinity. "Smite, Sacred Reality," he cries in the anguish of "A Faith on Trial"; and when we can say that in sincerity, he adds, "we have come of our faith's ordeal." Meredith and Mr. Kipling alike are fiercely impatient of sentimental evasions of the facts of existence, and though, perhaps, far from agreement on details, are alike intolerant of half-baked social and political panaceas, both having gone to school to that wise spirit which teaches us to discriminate between true idealism and its spurious, sophomoric imitations.

A BELIEVER IN DUTY AND DISCIPLINE

For this reason Mr. Kipling is by many regarded as a reactionary—a label, it is to be feared, which must be patiently accepted by all such who do not swallow wholesale those nostrums of contemporary lawlessness and disorder which parade variously under the names of progress and revolution.

Mr. Kipling has an old-fashioned belief in duty, and in the discipline which enforces it, and makes it second nature. "He did not know," he says of his *Brushwood Boy*, "that he bore with him from school and college a character worth much fine gold." Character—that is the old-fashioned quality which again and again he holds up

for our admiration in his mute, inglorious heroes, and possibly he writes sometimes a little too much as if it was an exclusively British possession.

For, in spite of his having, in Barrie's phrase, swaggered in bad company over so many continents, he is the least cosmopolitan of writers. He is nothing if not patriotic—that antique virtue which our internationalists are doing their best to ridicule and destroy. It was already, in many intellectual quarters, being superciliously depreciated as insularity, and so forth, when Mr. Kipling first "smote 'is bloomin' lyre." Perhaps, for some, the recent war, with its fearful menace, may point an old-fashioned moral in Mr. Kipling's favor; and those who study it, and who are following, too, the recent developments among the various new peace-born nations, may hesitate before exchanging it for the blessings of the "internation."

In fact, Mr. Kipling is, both by temperament and by conviction, a Tory. Among other Tory beliefs he holds that a man is a man and a woman is a woman, and would seem to take little stock in the present-day confusion between the sexes. We know his opinion of the "female of the species," but we must not forget his many tender stories about women, nor his weakness for that little Burmese maiden on the steps of the pagoda at Moulmein, and, above all, his "Mary, Pity Women." After all, chivalry is an older institution than woman suffrage—though personally I find it impossible to understand the reasoning that would deny complete political enfranchisement to women.

But it is not necessary to agree with the whole of a writer to be glad of him, and this is especially true of Mr. Kipling. One may, indeed, often violently, disagree with him, for his work is very much of a challenge to his time, yet admire and give thanks for him all the same. Perhaps as one grows older and better acquainted with the works and ways of his God of Things as They Are, one is inclined to agree with him more rather than less; nor need the doing so imply our senectitude, for we must recall that Mr. Kipling thought the same at twenty as he does now, that his young shoulders were born with a strangely old Tory head upon them. He saw the Thing as It Is from a very early age; and, when we say that, we must not forget that it was far from being only the seamy side of it

that he saw. He saw that, indeed, with strangely precocious eyes, but it was as nothing in his vision compared with the power and the glory, the wonder and the mystery, which he also saw, and which no man of our time has seen with clearer, more passionate, or more worshipful seeing.

KIPLING AS A LITERARY CRAFTSMAN

I have said more than enough of Kipling, the moralist and patriot. Let us return to that other Kipling—those other Kiplings—who embodied, or rather infused, that morality and patriotism, with so little suspicion of medicinal intent, in magical storytelling and masterful, swinging music.

I have recently read Mr. Kipling through again from beginning to end; but I found that, so far as refreshing one's memory was concerned, there was scarcely any need for that most pleasant enterprise. Alexandre Dumas scarcely "remembers" better. As I came to the title of each story—the best of the stories, at all events—I recalled it at once, knew whom I was going to meet and what was going to happen. All that remained, for the most part, was to taste again the way of the telling—to test the magic, in fact; and, when you know a story in advance, it is no little of a test, let me assure you. There are, I will admit, some old favorites on whom one hesitates to try it. No sacred names mentioned, but—well, it has been wonderful and comforting to find how well Mr. Kipling has borne that test—how well he wears.

I tried first one of the earliest thrills he ever gave me—the first, I suppose, he gave any of us—the story in "Plain Tales" called "Thrown Away," which ends with those awful flies, that awful murmur of flies. It is the story of the boy who had been brought up under the "sheltered life" theory—the young subaltern who had taken his gambling debts seriously and gone out into the jungle and blown his brains out; and how his brother officers found him, having first heard "the *brr-brr-brr* of a multitude of flies"; and how they found a letter to his mother confessing all, and promptly tore it up, and, with comradely loyalty and gentleness, concocted another very different one; and how they buried him and said the Lord's Prayer over him, and so on. Yes, though I had been expecting them all through—and though they have been imitated since, how often!—turned into tricks by so many inferior

hands, for "all have got the seed"—when I came to the flies, I found the same grim "creep" awaiting me. Such remains the remarkable illusion of the telling.

And it was the same with "Beyond the Pale"—that little native girl, you remember, whom the Englishman unwisely loved, and with her arms, at the last, thrust out through the grating into the moonlight—both hands cut off at the wrists!

And, again, it was the same with "At the End of the Passage," and "The Gate of a Hundred Sorrows," and "In the House of Suddhoo," and through all the books it was the same. "Without Benefit of Clergy," "The Mark of the Beast," "The Man Who Was," "The Man Who Would Be King"—one forgotten story after another. Not one of these, nor any of the well-remembered rest, failed me. The magician's carpet, as on my first delighted journey, had once more carried me, in a twinkling, to—

The oldest land wherein the powers of darkness rage.

The strange smell of India was in my nostrils, and once more I lay under the spell of its brooding, ancient terror and its tarnished magnificence. As before, too, I wondered at the literary craftsmanship which produced these effects with so little betrayal of itself, with an utter freedom from conscious art, by some hypnotic suggestion of atmosphere infused into the plain, straightforward English, by the unconscious operation of the clear-seeing imagination of the teller—teller, rather than writer. For the sense of writing is curiously absent from these vivid incantations of the pen.

KIPLING'S WONDERFUL RANGE

I found, with a special gratitude, that the same was true also of the humorous stories. "Soldiers Three" no more failed me, on renewed acquaintance, than their great prototypes, the *Musketeers* of Dumas, fail us. The laughter of *Mulvaney*, *Ortheris*, and *Learoyd* was the same honest, earth-born laughter as at first. "The Courting of Dinah Shadd," "My Lord the Elephant," "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney," were as exuberantly funny and human as ever. Again, too, *Mowgli* came walking toward me down the dried bed of the stream, the same strange and lovely apparition, with the wreath of white convolvulus about his brows; and, as once more I came to the end of "Kim," I put the book down

with the same sense of hallowing tenderness that had spread its hush about me at the first reading.

The same man who had written of the "Night Mail," that glorification of modern mechanism, who had seemed to rub his hands in "On Greenhow Hill" over the "hunting of man," and had cried out, "Give 'em hell, O give 'em hell!" with *Dick Heldar*, had written of this most touching of all pilgrimages, of that exquisitely tender love between the old priest and his little gamin companion, had dreamed the dream of the River of the Arrow. It was a wonderful range for one man to have, and it is the spirit that animates "Kim" that is the soul moving behind and through all those other interests and gifts.

Then I turned to the "Barrack-Room Ballads," and found the very dross and slag of language transmuted into rainbows, into the fine gold of tragedy and pathos and humor. To what fine issues had the old music-hall convention been touched; and what gusto and joy and anguish of life danced and laughed and cried, and swept and marched and jiggled us along in all that spirited singing! What chanteys have ever had in them such swing and roar and tang of the sea as "L'Envoi":

There's a whisper down the field where the year
has shot her yield,
And the ricks stand gray to the sun,
Singing: "Over there, come over, for the bee has
quit the clover,
And our English summer's done."
You have heard the beat of the off-shore wind
And the thresh of the deep-sea rain;
You have heard the song—how long, how long!
Pull out on the trail again!

And who else has put into words so enthrallingly what perhaps the finest of the many who have taken Mr. Kipling for their master has named the "call of the wild," as in "The Feet of the Young Men":

So for one the wet sail arching through the rain-
bow round the bow,
And for one the creak of snow-shoes on the
crust;
And for one the lakeside lilies where the bull
moose waits the cow,
And for one the mule-train coughing in the dust.
Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight? Who
hath heard the birch-log burning?
Who is quick to read the noises of the night?
Let him follow with the others, for the Young
Men's feet are turning
To the camps of proved desire and known
delight!

*He must go—go—go away from here!
On the other side the world he's overdue.*

*Send your road is clear before you when the old
spring-fret comes o'er you
And the Red Gods call for you!*

Among the variety of those gifts here very cursorily surveyed, Mr. Kipling has another of great usefulness for the man who, either as moralist or poet-publicist, would influence his times—a happy talent for inventing homely symbols and catchwords to illustrate and popularize his message, or to provide a rallying-cry or formula for some attitude of the general mind that is in the air at a particular moment.

NEW MESSAGES FOR NEW DAYS

Such has been "Take Up the White Man's Burden," and "The Sons of Martha," a scathing satire on all those intellectuals and idealists who talk and theorize and dream, while the practical men whom they loftily patronize do the hard and necessary work of the world:

They do not preach that their God will rouse them a little before the nuts work loose.
They do not teach that His Pity allows them to leave their work when they damn well choose.
As in the thronged and the lighted ways, so in the dark and the desert they stand,
Wary and watchful all their days that their brethren's days may be long in the land.

And the Sons of Mary smile and are blessed—they know the angels are on their side.
They know in them is the Grace confessed, and for them are the Mercies multiplied.
They sit at the Feet—they hear the Word—they see how truly the Promise runs;
They have cast their burden upon the Lord, and—the Lord He lays it on Martha's Sons!

A sort of postscript to this, a delightful bit of irony called "Mary's Son," occurs in Mr. Kipling's last book, "The Years Between," the latest fruitage of his many-fruited tree:

If you stop to find out what your wages will be
And how they will clothe and feed you,
Willie, my son, don't you go on the sea,
For the sea will never need you.

If you ask for the reason of every command,
And argue with people about you,
Willie, my son, don't you go on the land,
For the land will do better without you.

If you stop to consider the work you have done,
And to boast what your labor is worth, dear,
Angels may come for you, Willie, my son,
But you'll never be wanted on earth, dear!

In these and many other poems, as throughout his work generally, one is struck by the great influence the Bible has had

over Mr. Kipling, in common with many other great English writers, and by the striking use to which he has put his reading of it. A curious and particularly vivid instance of this is the poem "En-Dor," also in the new volume, a suggestive and rather enigmatic comment on the recent wave of spiritualism, owing to the war, and the attempts of bereaved people to communicate with their dead through the interposition of mediums. The whole rationale of a séance is very graphically hinted at—the pathos of the hope, the plausibility of the trick, the certainty of the illusion:

Whispers shall comfort us out of the dark—
Hands—ah, God, that we knew!
Visions and voices—look and hark!—
Shall prove that our tale is true,
And that those who have passed to the further shore
May be hailed—at a price—on the road to En-Dor.

*Oh, the road to En-Dor is the oldest road
And the craziest road of all!
Straight it runs to the witch's abode,
As it did in the days of Saul,
And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store
For such as go down on the road to En-Dor!*

In this new volume, "The Years Between"—which, as might be expected from the seriousness of the times, represents Mr. Kipling chiefly as the poet-moralist—the poem which, by virtue of both theme and treatment, stands above the rest is, doubtless, the fine salutation to "France—1913," a noble and illuminative recognition of the essentially identical humanistic idealism of the French and Anglo-Saxon spirits—despite all the old rivalries and "battles long ago." I must find room for a few lines:

*Broke to every known mischance, lifted over all
By the light, sane joy of life, the buckler of the Gaul;
Furious in luxury, merciless in toil,
Terrible with strength that draws from her tireless soil;
Strictest judge of her own worth, gentlest of man's mind,
First to follow truth and last to leave old truths behind—
France, beloved of every soul that loves its fellow-kind!*

Spurred or balked at every stride by the other's strength,
So we rode the ages down and every ocean's length!
Where did you refrain from us or we refrain from you?
Ask the wave that has not watched war between us two!
Others held us for a while, but with weaker charms;
These we quitted at the call for each other's arms.

Eager toward the known delight, equally we strove—
 Each the other's mystery, terror, need, and love.
 To each other's open court with our proofs we came.
 Where could we find honor else, or men to test our claim?
 From each other's throat we wrenched—valor's last reward—
 That extorted word of praise gasped 'twixt lunge and guard.
 In each other's cup we poured mingled blood and tears,
 Brutal joys, unmeasured hopes, intolerable fears—
 All that soiled or salted life for a thousand years.
 Proved beyond the need of proof, matched in every clime,
 O companion, we have lived greatly through all time!

One is particularly glad of this poem, because it definitely absolves Mr. Kipling from that limitation of British insularity, imperialism, provincialism, and so forth, with which he stands charged by many readers. The charge comes from those who have not read sufficiently below the surface—or, in fact, read Mr. Kipling very thoroughly on the surface, either. It is true that he has sung the glories of England, as it is meet and proper for an Englishman to do. And he has sung the British army, not so much as a military machine, in which he has been far from always professing pride, but because of his affection for his personal friend, that quaint, rather pathetic, and very humorous being, Mr. Thomas Atkins. It is hard, as he has said, if a fellow cannot sing of "the little things he cares about."

NO FLATTERER OF HIS COUNTRYMEN

But Mr. Kipling cares too sincerely about England, has her best good too deeply at heart, foolishly to flatter her; and on several momentous occasions he has not hesitated to call her sharply to task without fear or favor. The man who wrote "The Islanders" is no flatterer, but the wielder of a truly patriotic scourge. It dealt with the materialistic apathy into which Mr. Kipling considered England to have fallen about the time of the South African War, her thoughtless self-confidence and luxurious indifference to the men who went out to fight her battles and do her work at the ends of the earth:

Yet ye were saved by a remnant (and your land's long-suffering star)
 When your strong men cheered in their millions while your striplings went to the war;
 And ye sent them comfits and pictures to help them harry your foes,

And ye vaunted your fathomless power, and ye flaunted your iron pride,
 Ere ye fawned on the Younger Nations for the men who could shoot and ride!
 Then ye returned to your trinkets; then ye contented your souls
 With the flanneled fools at the wicket or the muddled oafs at the goals.

Not much flattery of England here! Literary gall and wormwood have seldom been more bitter than that last thrust at the traditional phrase about the battle of Waterloo having been won on the playing-fields of Eton.

No, not England alone, but the Anglo-Saxon, the English stock wherever found—in America, in Canada, in Australia, in all the offshoots of England the mother—and the sense of duty, honest work, and upright living, the manliness and essential morality, the thoroughness and fair play, that that stock has mainly stood for, have been Mr. Kipling's theme.

There was a passing unfortunate moment when America took umbrage at certain observations made by Mr. Kipling on his first visit here, much as she took umbrage at Dickens years ago, ignoring the general sympathy and even enthusiasm of his commentary. But that time has happily passed, and I believe that America has come to see that Mr. Kipling is at least as much her mouthpiece as England's own, and that no living man is better fitted to interpret the one country to the other, to further that *rapprochement* of great daughter to great mother, which is merely the affirmation of a natural fact, and to impede which should be regarded as the greatest possible crime against civilization. Here is a work to do of true internationalism founded on ties of blood and spirit, as distinct from that spurious internationalism bred merely in the brains of theorists and sentimentalists, and all such ink-blooded deniers of the God of Things as They Are.

Mr. Kipling, no less than any one, realizes that the world moves, but he realizes, too, that it does so in "a mysterious way," and very slowly, and that there is no use in trying to hurry it up with bombs on the one hand, or to feed it with soothing-sirup on the other. By seeing it clearly as it is, he is the more useful in helping it toward what it is in endless process of becoming. His publishers advertise "The Remarkable Rightness of Rudyard Kipling." Here for once is a publishers' advertisement that may be accepted as one-hundred-per-cent true.

The Girl Named Rose

BY ELEANOR INGRAM

Illustrated by F. McAnelly

THE whistles!" the blind man repeated. "Listen to the whistles, Mme. Sally! They blew like that on the day our ship came in. It seemed like an especially kind thought of New York's for those of us who could not see that we were at home; it made us realize we were there. Although I think I should have known, anyhow. The smell in the air, even the rain in one's face, felt like Manhattan. And this morning another transport is in. More lucky fellows—if they all have Mme. Sallys to come home to."

He held out his hand and his companion put hers into it. The two hands closed firmly together, palm to palm. No young woman could give a clasp like that, the man reflected; only age or oneness of sex could know that calm, steady comradeship. Only beautiful age, he quickly amended his first thought.

Together, they listened to the swelling clamor that filled the air as running water fills a cup. The droning roar seemed a solid bulk of sound pierced through here and there by the crescendo of siren whistles that soared like screams of jubilation to die down a scale of happy exhaustion.

"Not that I was so happy when I first heard the whistles," he presently said. "Ungrateful of me, of course, since I had the hope of regaining my sight in time, when so many have—nothing. But coming home to a long wait in a dreary hospital is not a very joyous business; especially to a man whose father, mother, and sister were all swept away from him in one ghastly disaster. It all came back, there on the wharf in the drizzling rain."

The comforting hand pressed closer to his—the hand that had the texture and, as he imagined, the color of satin mellowed to an ivory tint in some cedar-scented chest.

"I do—I did try not to think of morbid things," he excused himself. "But, dear

Mme. Sally, will you ever understand what I felt when you came hurrying to me there on the wharf, all gaiety and daintiness, soft words and soft, caressing touches? When you made me comprehend who you were, and that you meant to carry me off to your home for these months of waiting, because my people and you had been neighbors in a sleepy little Connecticut town? You sank into me like sunshine into frozen ground. I did not believe I could ever be so happy as you've made me here."

"Yet you were very obstinate at first, Jeffery."

"Because I feared to burden you."

"Or because I am such a flighty old lady?"

"No, never!"

"No, not really; just a lonely one who wanted so much to help."

"We have had three months together since then, Mme. Sally."

"Yes, Jeffery."

He relaxed luxuriously in his long chair.

"Tell me again what this room looks like. Make me see it."

The little figure beside him rose to close the window. The welcoming clamor of city and harbor was ended now. She returned to her chair opposite to his, across the hearth, and took up her knitting.

"It is a square room," she began; "with golden-brown walls, a gleaming brown floor with some Chinese rugs, and latticed windows where gold-colored silk curtains will flutter against the jars of daffodils and fuss the poor flowers to a quiver. The fat chairs are brown willow with gold-colored cushions, and so is the couch. But on the table, at the opposite end from where the gold-shaded lamp stands and my orange, Persian pussy-cat is asleep at this moment—ah, there is the artistic color break! There stands a big, lovely, rose-pink bowl with a bevy of wee goldfish swimming in

the clear water and flirting their little fins in Oriental contempt for all us crude Western folk. Also, there is a gay lacquered stick such as Chinese ladies use for stirring those same goldfish into action when they loaf too long. And, of course, there is the fire, behind my bronze andirons from the old brick house in Connecticut; and the low bookcases

I remember seeing you in our home town when I was a boy. You are not very tall, yet you achieve an effect of stateliness. Your hair is white, I remember, and it is



"IF YOU REMEMBER
HOW DULL HER LIFE
WAS, IT IS NOT ASTON-
ISHING THAT WATCHING HIS ACTIVITIES
BECAME ROSE'S GREAT AMUSEMENT"

around the walls. Altogether, I flatter myself that it is a room that looks as if the sun were shining in it, even on cloudy days."

"The sun is shining in any room where you are, always," he replied. "And I can put you into the chair opposite me, because

curly, because I have touched it. What color is your dress to-day?"

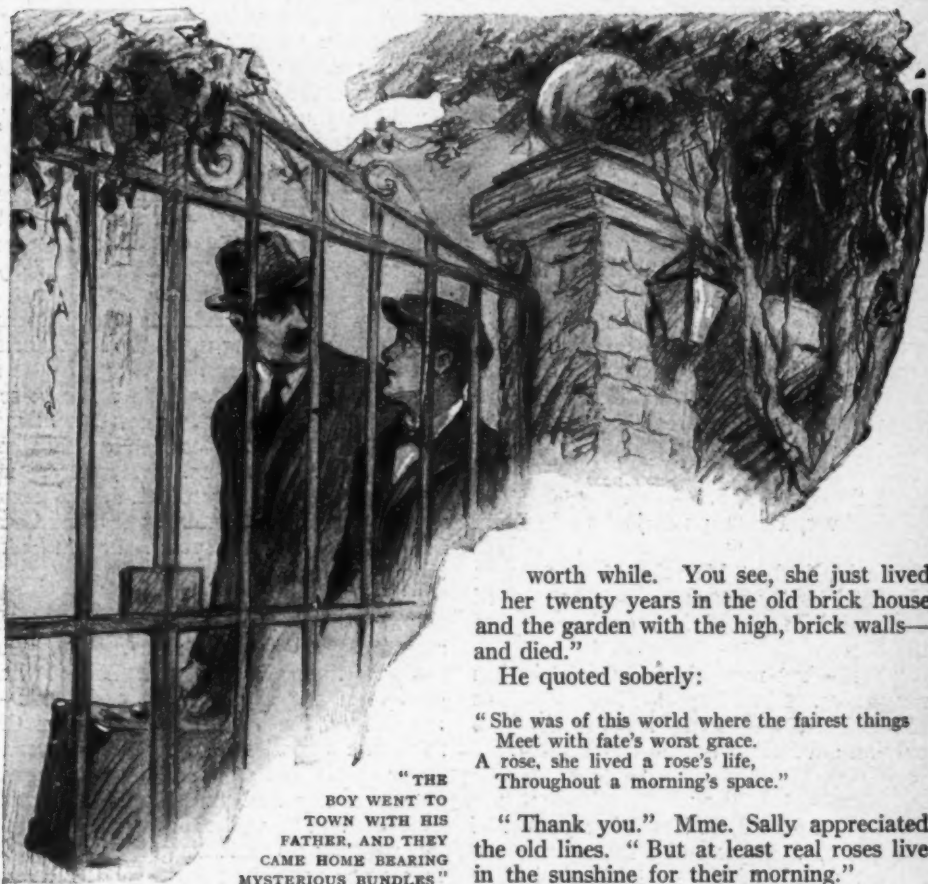
"A daring one for my years and dignity—pink linen, with white collar and cuffs."

"Good! To match the pink Chinese bowl! And I know you have brown eyes."

"The family record at home says I was born—"

"Never mind that. You haven't told me to-day about the pictures on our brown

"It does not pain me to speak of her," she slowly denied. The whisper of the knitting-needles stopped. "Only, since you do not remember her, it has not seemed



"THE BOY WENT TO TOWN WITH HIS FATHER, AND THEY CAME HOME BEARING MYSTERIOUS BUNDLES"

walls. And that reminds me—you have never told me what the little oval picture is, the one on the wall beside me. I happened to brush against it this morning as I came in, so I ran my fingers over it to see what it was shaped like. I am quite sure you never described it for me, or I would not have forgotten. It must be facing you now, as you sit there."

Mme. Sally stirred in her chair and hesitated.

"Yes, it faces me," she corroborated. "It is a portrait of my grandniece, Rose, who died last year."

"I beg your pardon," he regretted. "Don't try to describe it. I did not mean to give you pain."

worth while. You see, she just lived her twenty years in the old brick house and the garden with the high, brick walls—and died."

He quoted soberly:

"She was of this world where the fairest things Meet with fate's worst grace. A rose, she lived a rose's life, Throughout a morning's space."

"Thank you." Mme. Sally appreciated the old lines. "But at least real roses live in the sunshine for their morning."

"And your Rose did not?"

"No. At best her morning's space was a misty morning, with drops falling from trees and hedges like tears. She was spared storms, it is true; but I think she grew so very, very tired that she just stopped living. I did not understand her then; not in the least. I could do better for her now."

"I remember your house across the road from ours, and your garden closed in by a high, brick wall, all moss-grown with age," Jeffery said thoughtfully. "I remember you at its gate, once when I took you a message from my mother. Of course, I knew there was a little girl at your house, but I cannot seem to remember her. I was always so busy as a boy."

"Yes; always."

"Mme. Sally, how you say that! And you always evade telling me about your Rose in a way that makes me feel almost as if I were somehow at fault; almost as if I had known her and somehow offended her. Is it possible that I did?"

"No. You never knew her, so certainly you never offended her. I hear Dr. Martin's car stopping at our door."

"Mme. Sally, if it does not give you pain will you tell me the story of your Rose some time?" he asked bluntly.

The needles in her hands clicked together with her movement to rise, and she paused to secure them in the web of wool.

"Some time before you are quite well and go away to your man's world," she promised. "If you want me to, really."

"I have only ears to bring grist to my mind, now that my eyes are closed," he deprecated. "Consequently, they are shamelessly ravenous. But I am never going away anywhere without taking you along. You've got to adopt me."

"I thought I had."

"Forever, I mean; not just while I am blind."

She laughed at his urgency, but swept her hand lightly across his hair by way of assent as she passed him on her way to the door.

"Well—but meanwhile Dr. Martin has rung twice. I had forgotten Marina was at the market, bargaining for our food as only an old Italian woman can bargain."

II

JEFFERY HARLETH heard her go out of the room, and presently there were the distant sounds of the doctor's admittance and greeting. There was always an interval before he came in to his patient, while he "visited" with Mme. Sally. There was a cordial friendship between those two. Harleth waited, vaguely listening to the fire snapping on the hearth and making soft sounds like the rustling of fabric—the rustle of a beautiful woman's flame-silk gown, he fancied dreamily; or perhaps the waving of her plumed fan.

He was still intrigued by the image of the dead girl whose life he glimpsed behind the lattice of Mme. Sally's reserve. Somehow he felt assured that more mystery than grief went into the making of that lattice erected by Rose's great-aunt. He resolved that he would look at the portrait of Rose when the doctor took off his bandages; the

first day, right after he looked at Dr. Martin, his very good friend, and Mme. Sally, best friend of all.

The doctor was in the room a moment later, firm hand grasping the invalid's, hearty voice greeting him.

After the usual routine was finished, Harleth put the question he allowed himself only at intervals:

"When can I have these bandages off, doc? When can I see?"

"Much sooner than I expected," said the doctor cheerfully. "But little by little, you know. I shall not turn you out to gambol in the sunshine all at once. Shaded places at first. You'll have to use Mme. Sally for sunbeams for a while."

"That is not very hard to do," Harleth said, his heart leaping up at the suddenness of the promised release.

"No," agreed the doctor in a low voice.

"In fact, she is a sunshine that I hope to keep all my life," Harleth confided with an outburst of frankness. "Neither of us has a relative in the world. I do not know why a man should not adopt an aunt, or an old lady adopt a nephew. If you knew the comrade she is!"

"I can guess."

"I never guessed that there could be any one like her, day in and day out. She has a grief of her own, too. She lost her grandniece recently, the last of her kin—the girl on the wall, there. I mean the miniature opposite Mme. Sally's favorite seat."

The doctor had finished his work for that day. He walked over to the wall indicated by his patient's gesture and stood before the portrait.

"Dr. Martin, will you describe that miniature for me?" Harleth asked abruptly.

"Hasn't Mme. Sally done so already?"

"No. She just said it was a portrait of her grandniece, Rose."

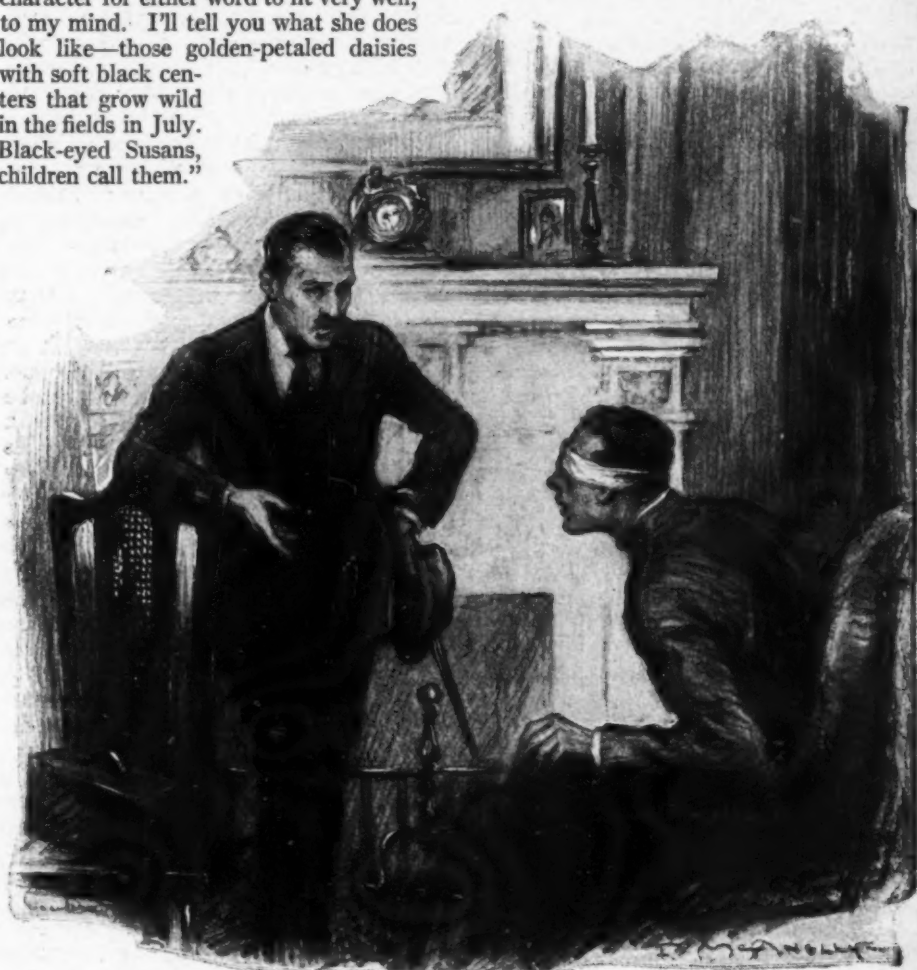
He could imagine Martin nodding assent. The doctor began to speak with slow and careful accuracy.

"The frame is an oval about as broad as my palm; ivory, carved with some kind of flowers that hang down over the glass here and there in an odd sort of way. The girl in it would be looking across her shoulder, with her chin sort of tilted, as if some one had just spoken to her. She has a warm complexion; not pink and white, but a kind of cream and deep rose that goes well with a lot of fuzzy brown hair heaped

up on her head and held with a high comb. Her eyebrows are the same color as her hair, her lashes, too, but her eyes are soot-black. I can't say whether you would call her beautiful or pretty. Her face has too much character for either word to fit very well, to my mind. I'll tell you what she does look like—those golden-petaled daisies with soft black centers that grow wild in the fields in July. Black-eyed Susans, children call them."

He stretched out his hand, and the doctor shook it briefly on his way to the door.

Mme. Sally did not come back at once after the doctor's departure. The old Sicilian who was Marina's husband came in



"NEITHER SHE NOR I HAVE MARRIED; BUT IS THAT ANY REASON WHY WE SHOULD NOT IF WE CHOOSE?"

Harleth nodded wonderingly.

"Thanks! I didn't know that you were such an art-lover, doc. Does she look like a girl who would die young?"

"No—yes, perhaps. Wait! She looks filled with health, but as if she possessed a flame within her that might consume it as a burning wick does oil, given occasion. I mean, if she found no safe outlet for all that fire."

"Thank you," said Harleth again.

to tend the fire. He also was Harleth's assistant nurse and valet, and he punctiliously inquired as to the patient's possible needs before withdrawing from the room.

Harleth wanted nothing—at least, nothing that old Luigi could supply. He continued to sit with his face turned toward the picture that he could not see. He was profoundly stirred by the hope of release from his bandages and darkness days in advance of his most optimistic expectation;

yet the image of the dead Rose had the power to compel his attention like a living presence in the room.

"Why?" he asked himself, since he never had heeded her existence in the days when she dwelt in the old brick house opposite his father's place.

And why had she died at the age of twenty? Why was Mme. Sally so reluctant to speak of her? Could it be that Rose's history in some way had inspired Mme. Sally's beautiful kindness to him? No, that was too far-fetched. Yet the idea persisted.

III

By and by Mme. Sally came into the room again. She took her seat across from Jeffery, and various little sounds apprized him that she had brought sewing to occupy her hour. He heard the click of scissors, the whisper of thread unwound from a spool; he even detected the sweet-grass fragrance of her work-basket, and wondered if it were lined with colored satin, like baskets he had seen in shops.

"Mme. Sally!" He spoke abruptly. "Will you not tell me the story of your grandniece Rose?"

He heard her breath catch.

"Now?" she queried.

"Please."

"But—why?"

He considered before replying.

"I don't know any reason," he honestly admitted, "except that I should like to hear it. No, that isn't quite right; it seems as if I *ought* to hear it. I vaguely remember her as a child. Perhaps that is why I feel as I do. I can't explain, but the thought of her haunts me. If I heard her history I might be able to forget her."

"N-no," dissented Mme. Sally. "You will never quite forget her history, I fear."

"It is so striking?"

"No; it is quite commonplace."

"Tell me," he insisted.

"Then I must tell it as I learned to understand her mind after she died. If her guardian had understood while she lived, all might have been different."

"Yes."

He heard the click of thimble and scissors laid down together, and visioned Mme. Sally's white-curved head drooping to her supporting hand. Probably she was gazing at the fire on the hearth, he thought.

"Rose was a lonely little girl," she de-

clared. "Always I see her alone, now, when I look back. We were very proud and quite poor. Because Marina and Luigi had lived with us year after year, and kept the brick house and garden in order and dignity, no one guessed how poor we really were. They loved us, and they managed with so little to spend, such tiny wages. But at times even food was scanty. Never was there money for pretty frocks or fun for Rose. Probably it was her misfortune that our neighborhood had grown into a fashionable, well-to-do colony of people from the city. It takes money to mingle pleasantly with such people. So, more than ever, we stayed shut away in the brick house and met no one. Rose did not even go to school. I taught her what I could, as did her other aunt, my sister, Mme. Camilla. Also, she read tirelessly in our musty library. I know now that her head was filled with dreams. Perhaps that was why she fell in love with the first reality that came before her fancy, when she was eleven years old."

"In love at eleven?" he asked, smiling.

"Not lovers' love, of course; but is not a child's love as ardent, if different from man's or woman's? Did you yourself never love a puppy or a kitten or some special person until you just ached with ardor? Ah, I touched you there!"

"Oh, yes, that way. I had a dog—"

"Of course! What boy hasn't? But, you see, Rose had not even a pet, except Aunt Camilla's aged pair of love-birds who sat with their heads together all day. So she took into her affection a little boy whom she first saw galloping a small pony out the gates of the new house opposite her own. His parents had built the house and had just moved in. He was a very real boy indeed, riding the pony as fast as it could pelt and shouting like an Indian. Snow flew from the pony's hoofs; the boy waved a hockey-stick above his head and bore a pair of bright skates slung over his shoulder. The little girl shut in the prim brick house marveled at his aliveness, envied him. Please do not suppose that she was sentimental about him, or had precocious ideas of love and marriage. Nothing of the sort existed. She wished that she was a boy, to go with him.

"He always was doing something interesting. He rode out with his mother in a big limousine; went to town with his father, and they came home bearing mysterious

bundles. He dashed in and out on the pony, followed by a Chow dog whose tongue was purple instead of pink, like other dogs Rose had seen. He had numbers of boy friends. There were parties for his birthday and holidays, when little girls in lovely frocks came, as well as the boys. If you remember how dull her life was, it is not astonishing that watching his activities became Rose's great amusement; or that her world became somewhat blank when he went away to school. At first, he came home every week-end."

"Wait," interrupted Harleth, with an odd breathlessness. "The house was opposite your own. What was the boy's name?"

"She did not know at first, so she called him Lucky, because he had so much. Later, when she learned his real name, she kept thinking of him as Lucky. She liked it better, perhaps, or thought it part of the secret game of playing that they were friends. She called herself Tom, and imagined all the stern masculine adventures they might have had together by sea and land."

"After a time, he stayed away at school, and then at college. His family spent much time in the city, but they came back to the little town each summer, so she still saw him occasionally. Then he settled in business in the city. Meanwhile she had become a young lady, almost without any one noticing the fact. You see, Camilla died, and Rose still seemed childishly young. There was no intent to neglect her; but no change was made in her drab life. She had no more friends than as a child, went out no more, saw no one."

"Then the war caught America into its whirlpool. Like a nun shut away behind a grating, Rose saw flags go up in the windows of houses. She heard music playing, and the tread of the boys marching away. Life and death, anguish and pride, the pulse of the world beating full stroke—and none of it for her! Three old people around her, chilled of blood, indifferent, sad, gray folk."

"Not you!"

"Yes, Jeffery, then. So blind I was, so wrapped in the custom of dreary years; but Rose— One day she read in a newspaper that Lucky had gone, was in France, a marine. Because she had no flag to put up in her window, no right to wear service pin or ring for any one, she began the old game again, secretly pretending that Lucky was her man at the front. She always

thought of him as magnificent and conquering. I was sitting in the living-room of the brick house one evening when she came in to me. It was dusk, and the lamp had not yet been lit, so her face and the newspaper she held were like pale blurs before me."

" 'Aunt Sally,' she said in a queer, high voice, 'Lucky isn't lucky any more. He is dying over there, and blind; and I think I am, too.' "

"She crumpled up in a little heap on the floor, as if she were very tired. I think she was; but the doctor said that she was sickening with influenza. It was a bad year for the young people. Our neighborhood lost many besides Rose."

"The man was—myself?" Harleth presently asked.

"Yes, Jeffery."

"How can you know all she felt, like that?"

"There was a book in her own desk. Lonely people still keep diaries, 'The Boy Who Might Have Played with Me,' she called it. She wrote down everything, even how much she wanted a new-fashioned frock instead of the kind I thought suitable."

There was a silence in the brown-and-gold room. Finally Mme. Sally added hurriedly:

"There was more in her desk. She had developed the oddest knack for writing fairy tales and illustrating them with funny, gay little sketches of her own. She never had thought of trying to sell them; but afterward I sent them to a publisher of children's books, and they sold amazingly. I have more money from them than I want. Later, when I heard how your parents were lost on that ship, trying to go to you; and how you were being sent home alone, it came to me that I might take old Luigi and Marina and make-you welcome here. Perhaps I could not bear the empty brick house any longer; or perhaps I wanted to see a bit of the world myself. At any rate, I came."

"God bless you for it!" he said.

"I think He has," returned Mme. Sally cheerfully.

IV

BUT she went out of the room after a few minutes, with some vague excuse about looking over Marina's purchases at the market. Which was absurd, for Marina

would have tolerated no such interference with her incomparable management.

Again Jeffery Harleth was left sitting alone, his bandaged eyes turned toward the little portrait on the wall; only this time he knew the story of the girl depicted there.

Some one, then, had thought about him! The idea abashed him unreasonably. What if he had known? Would he have lived differently, he wondered? He reviewed all those years—heedless, happy, crowded years, until the last two. At least, if he had known, he would have coaxed her out to play with him, perhaps to ride the yellow pony. Later, he might have called upon her, taken her motoring or even to the theater. His mother would have helped.

Perhaps, if she had known him really, all the glamour would have been brushed away. She might have ceased caring about the "boy who might have played with me." What, then, if he had learned to love her uselessly and to his grief?

What if they had come to love as man and woman? If she had had the right to wear his service pin? If he had come home to her, and she was here with him and Mme. Sally, and Rose meant youth, fragrance, warmth at the heart and lips?

Dreams! He and Mme. Sally were clasping lonely hands across darkness and age, with the sad wreckage of broken hopes all about them both.

He was aroused by the shovel rattling in the hod, and old Luigi's heavy breathing as he stooped over the hearth.

"Luigi!" Harleth welcomed his attendant. "Will you unhook the little portrait hanging on the wall there, and give it to me? I want it in my hands."

The shovel fell into the hod as it escaped the rheumatism-gnarled fingers.

"The—what, *signore?*" quavered Luigi.

"The picture, Luigi—the oval picture in the carved-ivory frame just over there." He pointed with careful memory. "The picture, I mean, of Miss Rose."

"You see that, *signore?*" the old man faltered.

"No, of course not. Mme. Sally told me it was there. I want it, to feel."

After a brief hesitation, Luigi shuffled across the floor and obeyed the request. Harleth's sharpened hearing advised him of the clink of a ring released from a hook, the servant's shuffling return to his side, and subsequent exit. He was left alone with the miniature in his grasp.

Reverently he passed his fingers over the glass, imagining the color and line behind that cold barrier. Holding the portrait, he deliberately recalled the doctor's description, word by word. Gradually there rose before him an image, rounded and vivid—soft eyes, like the dusky hearts of flowers glanced into his darkness; curls like thick, bright petals framed a girl's face. Yes, there came a fragrance with the vision—a cool, pure sweetness like the breath of fields in summer evenings when the black-eyed Susans were in bloom amid the rich grass.

When he was a boy—ah, incredible human stupidity in growing up!

He met Mme. Sally again at dinner. They did not allude to the girl named Rose. They were very merry on the subject of the first play Harleth would choose to see after his approaching release from his bandage.

The days quietly followed on through the next week or two without any return to the subject of the past; but Jeffery Harleth brooded much over the new image introduced into the dark little world in which he dwelt. There are men to whom the knowledge that they are loved makes an almost irresistible appeal. Others must walk all the steps to the goal, and are disgusted in advance with a love that comes to meet them. But the love of a girl who has passed out of reach is tantalizing; and the hidden affection of a girl child who is dead is as pitiful as a bird's cry by night.

Not that Harleth fancied Rose had loved him. He understood her childish hunger for a comrade; but he thought of what comradeship might have become, since neither of them had loved any one else. If she had been as perfect a chum as her Aunt Sally!

One day he abruptly spoke something of these thoughts to Mme. Sally.

"You were right about my never being able to forget the story you told me," he concluded. "Whenever I think of home, I must think of your niece, Rose; just as when I think suddenly of you, I always hear the whistles of New York harbor making a din of welcome where there was no welcome for me until your cordial hands gripped mine. We are never going to part, are we, Mme. Sally? We two waifs are bound together. I want to begin taking care of you, next."

"Thine own wish, wish I to thee in



THE DOOR OF THE ROOM OPENED WITH UNHURRIED QUIETNESS, AND A YOUNG GIRL HE HAD NEVER SEEN STOOD ON THE THRESHOLD

every place," she quoted sweetly to him. "And it is time for our tea! Did you sniff the *pan forte da Siena* that Marina has made for us?"

But she did not promise. It came to him later, with a vague qualm of unease, that she never had assented openly and frankly to the many plans he had spun for their united future. Neither had she ever refused or denied his wish. Was it

then a mere chance of speech, or did she purposely evade answering him?

V

ON the occasion of Dr. Martin's next visit, Harleth spoke to him of this perplexity. The professional part of the call was ended, and the doctor was packing his bag while Harleth set forth his desire and his doubt.

"I want her to be as much my kin as if she really were my aunt," he finished anxiously. "Why not? Townsfolk who know all about each other are sort of related, anyhow. There would be some one for me to come home to, when I get back in harness; some one for her to watch for. Won't you speak to her, doc, of how ideal that would be?"

"No," the doctor declined brusquely, "I won't."

"Why not?" stammered the astonished Harleth.

The bag snapped shut with a click.

"You selfish young brute!" said Martin queerly. "Did it ever occur to your conceit that some one else might want Mme. Sally? I want her, for instance. And if she can put up with me, I mean to have her."

Stupefied, Harleth sat up, turning his bandaged eyes toward the other man.

"I—I beg your pardon," he managed an apology. "Somehow, I had fancied you a younger man. Stupid of me."

"As for age, I do not call myself decrepit yet, and I am seven years older than she is," came the retort. "Neither she nor I have married; but is that any reason why we should not if we choose?"

"Of course! I mean, forgive me," essayed the amazed Harleth. "That is, I wish you luck."

"Oh, she hasn't taken me yet," the doctor dryly checked him, and took his departure hurriedly.

With a stricken sense of abandonment, Harleth faced toward the miniature on the wall. There was the companionship that should have been his—the flower-brightness of youth in the clasp of youth!

It was all as it should be, of course; yet Harleth could scarcely have been more wretchedly jealous and dejected at losing Rose than at losing Mme. Sally. Life in prospect seemed a blank thing, hardly worth the trouble of resuming at so much effort.

But two days later Dr. Martin spoke briefly to his patient on taking his leave.

"She won't have me," he announced.

He said no more than that, and clattered the door shut after him.

Harleth was ashamed of his relief.

A slight constraint that had sprung up between him and Mme. Sally during those two days quite melted away in the sunshine of his renewed content. Their comradeship seemed more exquisite than ever, after the

peril passed. In these, the last days of his sightlessness, the atmosphere of the brown bungalow sparkled pure and rarefied as the air of a mountaintop. It was a height of achievement on which he and Mme. Sally stood, before the inevitable descent into the ordinary levels of life. Even Luigi and Marina felt the excitement and strain, and the orange Persian aristocrat among cats took to sleeping on Harleth's knee, as if detecting in him the center of general interest.

The day drew near when Harleth was to be allowed to see. Already there had been experiments, all successful. The tension drew more taut among them all, even Dr. Martin succumbing at last. Indeed, his irritability with his patient almost came to be rudeness.

"Do you mean all the things you have said about Mme. Sally's being everything to you, Harleth?" he roughly demanded.

"Of course I mean it," Harleth answered, startled.

Martin walked across the floor and back, slapping his gloves across his open palm.

"I'll tell you something, Harleth," he volunteered ungraciously, "not because I want to. I suppose I have been brought up to some standards I can't escape. You were in the service, too—fought for the country, and all that. Well, you are expected to have your bandages taken off on Thursday."

"Yes."

"Mme. Sally is going away on Wednesday night—going secretly, so as not to worry you until it is over. She doesn't take your offer, old man, any more than she would take mine."

So that was it! Through all his shock of bitter disappointment, Harleth recognized the explanation of much that had puzzled him in these past days. Her gentleness had been that of one who knew that the end of their intimacy was nearing; her perfect companionship had the savor of all things about to end and be no more. It was with a sense of groping that he finally asked:

"Why?"

"I shall not tell you. I have betrayed her already. Whatever you do, see that you keep my confidence about that."

"What can I do if she doesn't want to stay?"

The doctor's gloves slapped across his palm half a dozen times before he answered.

"I'll take off your bandage Wednesday noon," he said.

Wednesday was the following day.

That was a long, strange evening that Harleth spent opposite the unconscious Mme. Sally. Was she altogether unconscious, though? He fancied a sadness beneath her airiest gaiety now that he knew the truth. When she read to him, the tender cadences of her voice had a poignancy not drawn from the story.

Yet, if she regretted, why go? Pride, perhaps; or perhaps she had used up all the money from Rose's fairy-tale book and refused to let him take care of her as he desired. He had promised Martin that he would not speak, but it was very hard to keep his word.

He was glad when the evening ended. Yet, after old Luigi had left him for the night, he found himself unable to sleep, and tossed through hours more unbearable than the earlier time had been.

VI

MORNING at last! Then the ordeal of casual greetings and breakfast. Unless something went wrong, it was Harleth's last meal with closed eyes.

More hours to be got through before Martin was due.

It was past noon when all was finally over, and the doctor, triumphant yet tired and subdued, was taking his departure.

"Keep the room shaded like this," he ordered by way of farewell. "Use your common sense and caution. I'll be back this afternoon. Luck to you!"

Left alone, Harleth sat in a renewal of sight like a miracle of rapture. For a while, it was enough; he had no thought of any one or anything else; but presently vision itself recalled him.

The shutters were closed and the silk curtains drawn, but still the room swam in a warm, mellow haze infinitely pleasant. All looked just as Mme. Sally had painted it for him, just as he had conceived it to be. In the rose-colored bowl the bright-scaled little fish circled placidly or poised in the clear water. His friend, the cat, yawned among the cushions of the window-seat. He thought it the loveliest room in the world.

Then he remembered a promise made to himself many times. Deliberately he turned toward the miniature of the girl named Rose who had died.

There was no portrait on the wall. Where

it should have been, some one had hung a small mirror. An oval mirror it was, in a carved-ivory frame.

After a moment, Harleth slowly stepped across and passed his fingers over the mirror, closing his eyes. He knew the thing with every intimacy of recognition. It was what he had held in his hands, what he had poured dreams upon, what Martin had described to him. Only, under that glass surface should have lain the pictured face of a girl who resembled a golden gentian.

A mirror! His heart began to beat quickened strokes of confused excitement. He did not know why, or what doubt and expectancy woke with the pulse. Why had Martin lied to him about the picture, and old Luigi also? Why—

The door of the room opened with that unhurried quietness so characteristic of Mme. Sally's movements. Harleth turned.

A young girl he had never seen stood on the threshold. She wore a short skirt of white serge and a white middie blouse, against which her flowing silk scarf made a splash of brilliant golden yellow. She wore absurd little white shoes, laced high, but not high enough to conceal a silken flash of yellow to match the scarf. A frivolous, small figure in Mme. Sally's doorway, surely!

Her hair was like thick, bright petals folded about her cream-pale little face, but her eyes were soot-dark. In her hands she held Mme. Sally's sewing-basket. He recognized the tinkle of its dainty tools and the adornment of silk and cretonne fruit he often had idly fingered while they chatted.

The girl did not observe his unbandaged eyes, fresh as she was from the outdoor light. She spoke quite calmly to him, while he stared transfixed.

"Such a good day! I never saw the river such a lovely blue. And only one day for you to wait before you see it, too!"

The voice was Mme. Sally's, serene yet elastic with life; dear to him in every warm cadence. Harleth never knew how he arrived at the right name, by what leaping instinct he cried it aloud.

"Rose!" he cried. "Rose! Rose!"

The basket escaped her grasp, and all its varied contents rolled merrily, clinking over the floor between them. Her startled, dark eyes flashed to meet the open ardor and marvel of his. Then, her hands covering her face, she fled back toward the door. Harleth won that race by just a stride.

"Mme. Sally!" he gasped in his utter bewilderment.

She answered between concealing fingers:

"I am—Mme. Sally. Let me go."

"Rose!"

"I am Rose. I was going away—I meant to be gone before you found out. Let me pass!"

Harleth pressed his shoulders more firmly against the door behind him. His brain was beginning to clear now. He understood Dr. Martin, old Luigi, even himself.

"Why?" he questioned unsteadily. "Don't we know each other better than most people ever do? Why, Mme. Sally, do you think I can ever forget your hand in the dark?"

"Let me go now. I—I will see you again before I leave. I promise! I will explain."

"But it is your house," he reminded her. "If some one must leave, I will. Only, why the haste? Don't you trust me except when I am blind?"

"Oh!"

He waited a long moment, while his newborn sight drank in her beauty and his heart steadied to a profound exultation. Then she turned away from him and walked across to Mme. Sally's chair beside the hearth. Still, with face averted, she sat down, clasping her hands on either arm of the chair, and spoiled all the dignity of the effect by crossing her ankles like a school-girl. Harleth cautiously ventured to follow and take his own chair opposite.

"You will not tell me"—he broke the silence with delicate care of each word—"that you who have been Mme. Sally believe me either so conceited or so dull as to misunderstand that childish friendship the little girl Rose gave the boy Lucky? Or the beautiful compassion that the present Rose showed to the blind, lonely man who had been her neighbor at home?"

"Everything I told you was true," she challenged, still turning her face away from him; "except that it was really poor Aunt Sally who died with the influenza."

"Yes, I know."

"I came here, then, to live near New York, where the fairy-books I write are

published. I brought Luigi and Marina with me because I love them, and neither of us have any one else. I wanted to live, not suffocate in the brick house. And I have! I make stories and pictures, and buy things I always wanted and never had."

"Yes."

"Until I read in the newspaper about your coming home. Then I couldn't bear to think of a boy from home, suffering alone—"

He leaned forward and gently took the little hand nearest him.

"The boy who might have played with you, and did not, and had no claim in the world to your goodness!"

"So I brought you here," she hurried on. "And even Dr. Martin helped when I told him. I do not know any one else here; and I planned to go away to-night, so that you would never know."

"Would you have left me so empty a husk, Rose, as life without you?"

"Hush!" she flamed, suddenly turning her shamed, hot-cheeked face to him in a flare of anger. "You shall not speak to me so! Never! Do you hear? I will not have gratitude and chivalry force you to pretty speeches, still less to pretend—love!"

"Why, no," said Harleth, his clasp firm on the small hand he held. "The little Rose never loved Lucky, I know; and how could the boy love a girl he never knew? Let the children go. But the man Jeffery Harleth and the woman he has known so closely in his blindness—he loves that comrade with every fiber that is in him. Oh, little Mme. Sally, you have seen all there is of me, depth or shallowness, good or bad! Perhaps you have seen too much, and must bid me go as you did poor Martin. If so, I shall not be surprised. But if it is not so, give me a chance. I tell you honestly, I would spend all my life to teach you, Rose, what Sally has taught me so well!"

The hand trembled under his.

"Or," said Harleth, "shall I go?"

Slowly the dark eyes came up to his.

"Perhaps you had better stay," breathed Mme. Sally across the young lips. "It—might not take—quite so long."

IN FANCY'S REALM

THOSE characters whose brave deeds I relate—
Existence must for them seem bright and fair.
No tax need they to pay on real estate,
Who live within my castles in the air!

Allene Gates

The Farewell of Ah Ken

BY J. H. C. GAINFORT

Illustrated by F. W. Small

AH KEN was hustled off the liner, a lone ripple in the current of saffron faces that passed over the narrow boards to the dock. These other men of his own land meant little to him. They were just coolies.

So, when he stepped on the shores of America, he turned his eyes toward the white people, for there lay the road to success. And among the white people he got his start in the new life of the new world. Ah Ken became cook to a household of four bachelors. He was a good cook, too, having learned the art in his father's house; and what the man of the East learns, he knows very well indeed. The four bachelors thought highly of their servant.

"But," said one of them, "Ah Ken is a heathen name. We will call you O'Connor."

So Ah Ken became O'Connor, which is a good name and an honored one. In those days the young Chinaman did not know this, but he did know that his white masters were men of substance and standing; hence what they said was to be respected. Moreover, he was mastering his dislike of change.

Much learning came to him in those days. He began to understand the strange-sounding language that the four bachelors spoke. Also, he learned much of life from the same source.

It came about, however, that the bachelors separated. They changed their habits, as is the custom of white people. Two married; one went on a journey; another went to live in a great hotel; and thus the duties of O'Connor ended.

But he soon found another place, for his cooking was truly an art. This time he cooked for the mistress of a fine house. There were many servants in it, and O'Connor was a man of position among them.

One of the servants was a Portuguese maid named Lola. O'Connor observed Lola the first day he saw her. Few things

escaped his thin eyes, and those few were not of much moment. Lola was decidedly a person to be noticed; but her brown eyes held disdain for the yellow-skinned cook.

The lessons of the four bachelors had not been wasted. Besides, the twenty-odd years of O'Connor's life had taught him something of the ways of men and women. One day he beckoned Lola to his side and handed her a small book. On the outside there were gold letters that spelled the name of a bank; and within were inky figures denoting a sum of money large enough to open Lola's brown eyes wider than ever.

"It is enough," said O'Connor, with the air of a man who knows.

Lola's disdain for the yellow skin vanished, and her red lips parted in a smile.

And so O'Connor, who had been Ah Ken, acquired a Portuguese bride. They left the house of the mistress of many servants. With some of the money from the little book of the gold letters they bought land.

O'Connor was fairly started on the main road now. He had found his true position. Back in his own China people dwelt on the land, and it yielded them life and the good things that man needs. He himself had worked on his father's land in the moist, warm valley of a great river. And these slopes of the Western mountains of America were fertile and green. They returned full measure for the work of O'Connor and his Lola.

Be it said that, having cast in her lot with the yellow man, this Portuguese girl gave no sign of regret; nor had she cause. She worked with him, and he on his part provided her with all that she ever had need of.

As time went on there blossomed from this union of East and West three flowers—daughters of nut-brown skin and soft eyes with just enough slant to give a spice of coquetry to their softness. O'Connor was

proud of his girls, and he worked harder than ever.

The farm on the slopes above the ocean grew and prospered. O'Connor bought other land from his less successful neighbors, and increased its yield to the standard he had set for his own. He became one of the largest landowners in the State, and acquired much wealth.

Ah Ken had become O'Connor; and now there was prefixed the honorable title of "Mister." It was said of him that he was a just man who dealt fairly with his neighbors. He did not spend his money freely, but he never failed to use it when necessity required. And none who sought his help in time of trouble was refused.

Mrs. O'Connor's needs were amply provided for, although she knew in her heart that her yellow husband thought first of his land; but

with his three daughters he was more disposed to be generous. They were taught music—not the wailing music of Ah Ken's people, but the clear, bell-like music of Mr. O'Connor's country. Painting, too, they learned, and all the accomplishments of leisure. Clothes were provided, not in profusion, but in quantities to satisfy their demands—which, after all, may be called profusion.

Two of the three daughters became the wives of Americans. A naval officer carried one off to the Philippines. A rich business man married the other, and surrounded her with luxuries, the existence of which her slant-eyed father had never dreamed in the days when he was Ah Ken. But the most beautiful daughter remained single. One day O'Connor called her to him.

"Why?" he asked.
She understood.



O'CONNOR WAS STARTED ON THE MAIN ROAD NOW. BACK IN HIS OWN CHINA PEOPLE DWELT ON THE LAND, AND IT YIELDED THEM LIFE AND THE GOOD THINGS THAT MAN NEEDS

"I would marry," she said, "but he has no money, and fears to take me because you are rich."

So O'Connor sent for the boy, and found him to be a fair-skinned American who had passed through a college that unfitted him for the struggle of life.

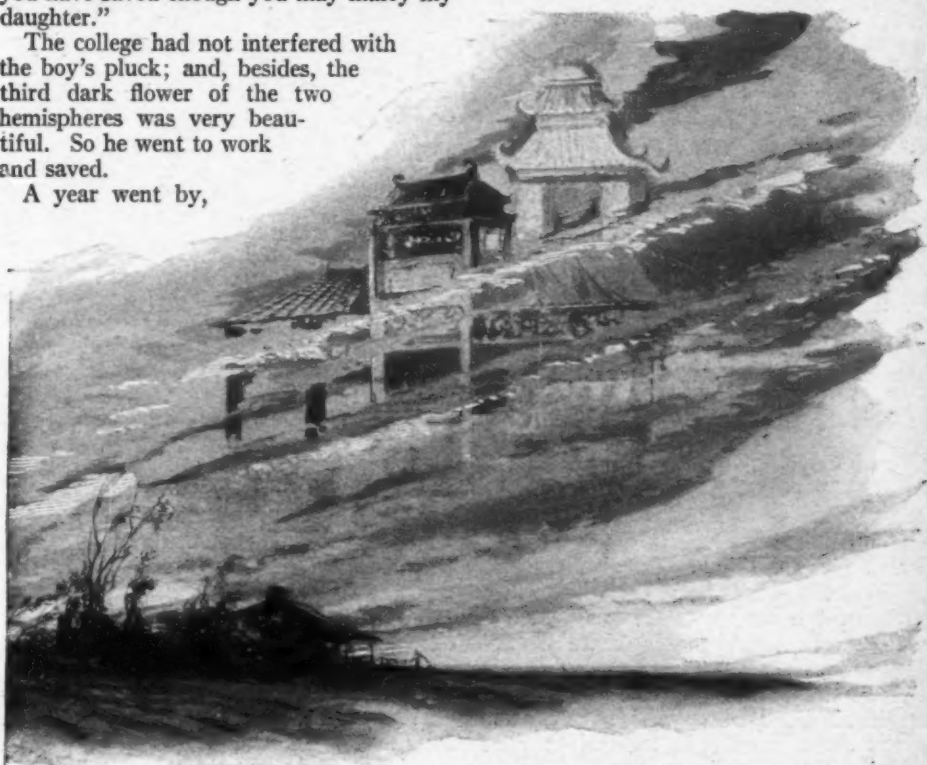
"If you will work on my farm I will pay you," O'Connor told him. "And when you have saved enough you may marry my daughter."

The college had not interfered with the boy's pluck; and, besides, the third dark flower of the two hemispheres was very beautiful. So he went to work and saved.

A year went by,

discussed at the table. From the beginning Lola's wishes had been considered; and since the three beautiful daughters were grown up they, too, had had their part in the guiding of the affairs of the O'Connors.

When O'Connor took his accustomed seat at the table that night his manner was as it had always been. His yellow skin had crinkled into many lines, and his shoul-



and still the boy was working and saving. O'Connor never mentioned their bargain. Then the boy came to him.

"I have waited for you to speak," said O'Connor. "A year is much time in this country of fast life, and you have worked well. I will give you land, and you can marry and dwell upon it."

So was married the third of the daughters of O'Connor, who was Ah Ken, and of Lola. And the parents were alone again.

Always O'Connor had taken his meals with Lola and the girls. This was as important to his mind as the careful providing for their needs. Whenever there was a matter of consequence to be settled, it was

discussed at the table. From the beginning Lola's wishes had been considered; and since the three beautiful daughters were grown up they, too, had had their part in the guiding of the affairs of the O'Connors. When O'Connor took his accustomed seat at the table that night his manner was as it had always been. His yellow skin had crinkled into many lines, and his shoul-

ders were not quite as straight as they were on the day when he showed Lola his bank-book for the first time. She had never seen it since; and it was with a little gasp of surprise that she watched him take a yellow-covered book from his pocket and thrust it toward her. It was different from the other book, and larger.

Then O'Connor spoke.

"I have counted my money and sold my land," he said. "I find that I have three millions of dollars; so I have taken one million and a half, and I am giving you one million and a half. To-night I return to China, where my wife and my sons await me. They have been patient. I must go!"

The Telltale

BY JACK BECHDOLT

Illustrated by Arthur D. Fuller

TWO men may travel as equals, but almost invariably, when three go into the woods, one of the three takes the lead.

It was not simply because he carried the compass that Jared Flint led his neighbors, Pierce and Holt, over the old trail that they had followed since noon. It was not solely due to Flint's position in the small settlement as its richest landowner; nor was it that Flint had asked these men to make the journey in order to appraise a distant timber claim about which he was disputing with the mill company. Like the sea, the forest resolves men into their elementary virtues, and an innate quality of leadership made Flint captain of the trio. Compact and rugged, he looked the part and played it.

First always, Flint mounted the trunk of a windfall and commanded a brief view of the mist-driven space before them.

"There she is, boys—Joy's old place," he announced.

There was no hint of triumph in his tone, but the relieved profanity of Pierce and the joyous shout from Holt testified to their feelings. Striking across the divide had been Flint's plan, suggested because it would save them twelve hours of hard travel. The country was new to the other two; they frankly confessed themselves lost in it. Following the difficult trail through the long, dreary, gray day, soaked to the skin by the dripping of that eternally storm-swept region of black forests and precipitous ledges, they had secretly lost heart and lost faith in their leader.

Pierce scrambled up beside Flint, his cheery red face glistening with wet, his sodden Mackinaw steaming.

"So that's Joy's place!" he echoed. "Can't be much of a place by this time, but it's welcome if it has a roof. You said there was a roof, Flint?"

"Don't know," grunted Flint. "I never was within more than a couple of miles of it, but any—"

"I said there was a roof," Holt corrected, joining his companions. "I was here a year ago, on my way to my son-in-law's claim across the divide. It had a roof then—fair enough shelter."

"It 'll be dark soon," announced Flint, and plunged forward through brush and thorns more than head-high, a vast entanglement of jungle that held water like a sponge. The other men followed without question.

There was scarcely light enough left, when they had fought through the brush of what had once been a clearing, to see the cabin. It appeared substantial, however, and the roof was standing.

The house had been built of logs with the bark left on. It had a window and a door, gaping black holes now, and a chimney at one end built of mud and sticks and partially fallen in.

There was no sound there except their own heavy breathing and the drip of the forest. The shell of what had once been a human habitation, their goal during the long day, seemed more repulsive, now they had found it, than the honest discomforts of the foot-hills.

Holt, tall, sallow, and melancholy of countenance, shuddered.

"Ugh!" he growled. "Give me a tree to lie under, any day, rather than this—when you think of what happened here."

"What do we care?" scoffed Pierce.

"Lend me your flash-light, Holt," said Flint, unperturbed. "Let's have a look inside."

With Holt's electric torch Flint led the way.

The fluttering disk of light disclosed a floor paved with split cedar logs, still solid; a table that occupied the center of the

cabin; a bench, home-made, like the table; and, against the wall, close by the remains of the old hearth, two bunks, built one above the other.

It was Pierce who laid his hand on the table and swore with startled emphasis. The flash-light revealed a growth of green fungus carpeting the table-top, half an inch thick, and nasty to the touch. Everything in Joy's cabin was covered with it.

"Get a fire ready," directed Flint. "I'll clean out that chimney."

For an hour they were very busy. A small lantern from their pack succeeded the torch. The fire on the hearth, so long cold, smoked a great deal, but it added life and color to the abandoned cabin. Frying bacon and boiling coffee gradually supplanted the damp fungus smell within those walls.

Outside, darkness was absolute, and now one of the eternal procession of clouds, warm from the Japan current, was sweeping the mountains, rattling big drops against the cedar-shake roof.

They sat close by the fire with their tin plates and cups. Flint was first to light his pipe. He stared serenely about the bare and moldy walls. Holt's restless eye followed his gaze, and the last of his bacon remained uneaten.

"See anything?" demanded Pierce, with a short laugh.

"This place—gives me the—creeps," Holt complained. "I've been past here half a dozen times, I suppose, since—since Joy was here—and I never felt like stopping yet."

A suggestion of a contemptuous smile curled Flint's lip. Pierce, who took his cue from Flint, shrugged his shoulders with elaborate unconcern.

"A roof's a roof," he grunted. "Don't matter to me where the last tenant went."

"Holt, you used to know Joy, I think?" Flint interrupted.

"Saw him once in a while, when he came out for grub," Holt admitted.

"What sort of man was he?" Pierce interrogated. "He was before my time."

"Why, I don't know—ordinary sort." Holt frowned with the effort of recollection. "Scotch-Irish, I guess, black-haired, wore whiskers. Had an idea there was mineral here—gold."

"Was there?" Pierce showed interest.

"He never found it, if there was—nothing but iron. There's iron all over these hills—and magnetite—nothing worth going

after; but he was always hoping, like most of the old-timers."

"Well fixed?" prompted Pierce.

"Money, you mean? Why, no, I guess not. Nobody ever knew it, anyhow."

"Well, what was he murdered for?"

"Didn't know he was murdered," Flint contributed.

"That's right, nobody knows," Holt agreed, with a shiver. "Just disappeared, that's all. Nobody ever found hide or hair of him, nor any evidence of violence. He just vanished, and the place has stayed empty."

"Stayed empty," Flint agreed. "No mystery about it, except the kind ignorant fools like to make up. Probably Joy got sick of looking and went on; those old-timers are always doing that. Finally some relative back in Ohio put in a bid for the land; court said Joy was legally dead—and there you are. Just because the place stayed empty, every liar in the county has a theory."

Pierce laughed boisterously and raised his coffee-cup.

"Here's looking at you, Joy!" he toasted the silent walls.

"Back a little piece, against the hillside, there's a little prospect hole Joy made," Holt went on presently, "and a lot of rock he took out. You can see it to-morrow morning."

"That's so," Flint agreed. "Saw it myself one time."

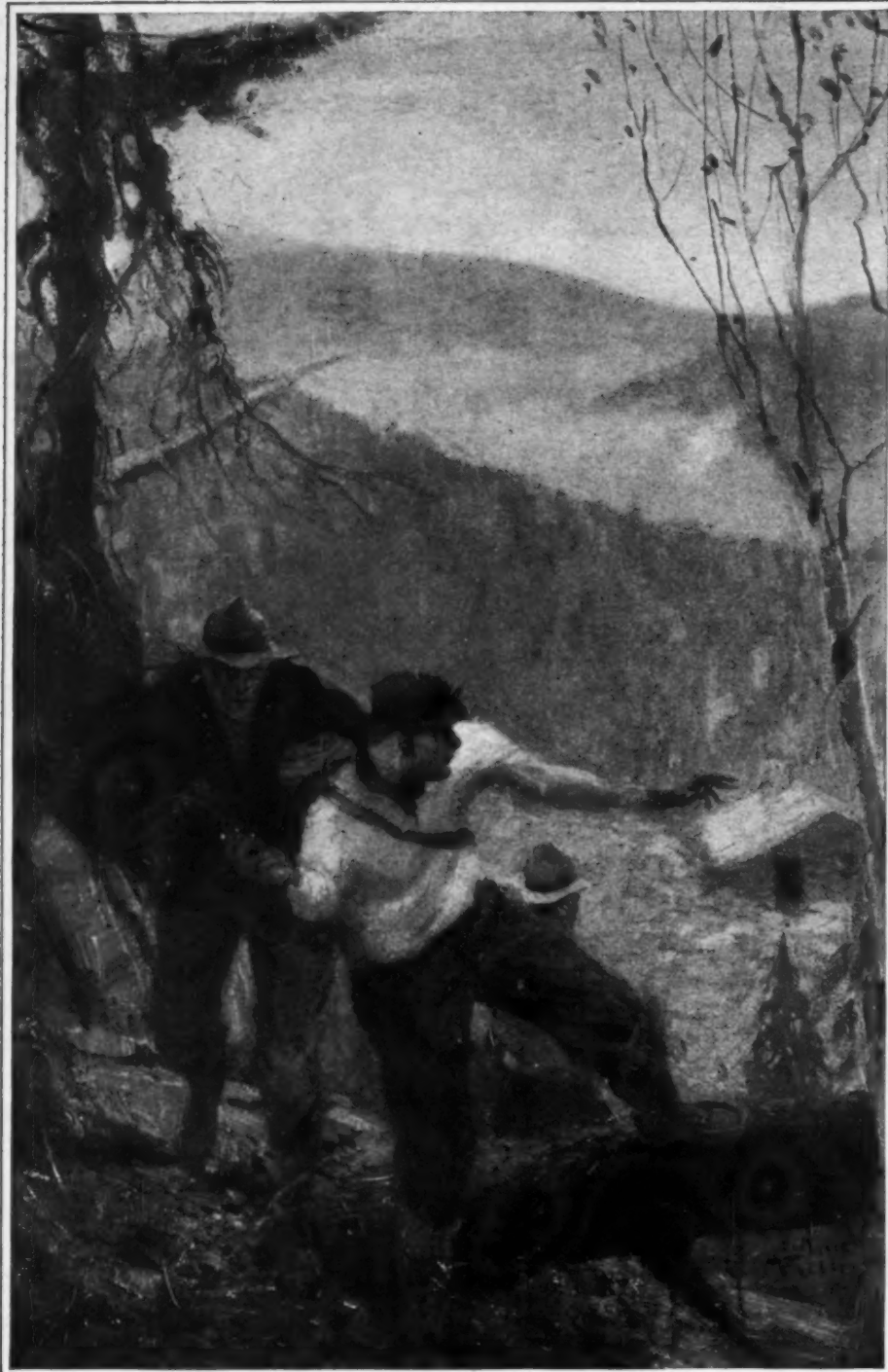
Pierce thrust his sock-clad feet closer to the flame and yawned elaborately.

"Me for blankets," he said. "We've got a hard hike ahead of us to-morrow, and I promised my wife I'd be back to the ranch for supper."

II

THEY had cleared the old bunks of rubbish and found a few dry fir-boughs with which to line them. Holt elected to sleep on the floor, leaving the bunks to Flint and Pierce. Flint climbed to the upper one after methodically placing his wet high boots by the fire, but not too close. Pierce produced a pocket flask, offered a drink around, was refused, and helped himself to a generous nip. Then he kicked off his shoes and rolled in his blanket. Holt remained, staring moodily into the fire, which was already losing its fight against wet, green wood.

"What's the matter, Holt? Afraid of



SNATCHING THE COMPASS THONG FROM AROUND HIS NECK, HE RAISED HIS ARM AS
IF TO HURL IT FROM HIM

ghosts of the murdered dead?" Pierce mocked.

"Who says he was murdered—or even that he's dead?" yawned Flint, his voice half smothered by blanket.

Holt shook his head uneasily.

"Some day we'll know. If we live long enough, it'll all come out."

"Rot!" snorted Pierce, always ready to argue. "That's old stuff, that murder-will-out theory. Why, I've known cases—"

"There is a just God," mourned Holt. He had a turn for religious melancholy. "He moves slowly, secretly, like a glacier; but He does justice."

"Well, I won't argue religion with anybody," Pierce protested sulkily; "but I've known cases, hundreds of cases you might say—"

A snore from above, where Flint lay, interrupted. Both laughed.

"Good night," said Pierce, and buried his head under his blanket.

With slow reluctance, as if he feared to move in that lonely place, Holt took off his boots and coat and spread his bed on the hard boards. For a weary time he tossed from side to side, and when finally he fell asleep he started often and murmured audibly.

Suddenly he sat upright, wide awake.

Of the fire there remained but a dim glow from under the logs. Gradually he made out the form of Pierce huddled under his blanket and breathing evenly. The gloom above was too dense for him to know if Flint lay there, but his eyes turned to the old hearth. One pair of boots was missing.

Holt rubbed his eyes sharply and looked again. There were but four boots, his own and Pierce's. He fumbled about in the coat that had been his pillow, found the electric torch, and flashed it on Flint's bunk. The blankets were empty.

Holt cast off his own blanket and rose. He flashed the torch about the little cabin, and saw nothing except rotting wood and luxuriant green mold. He peered out of the door, but the torch revealed only the glisten of drizzling rain.

Impatiently he sat on the hearth and drew on his boots, not stopping to lace them. Coatless, he stepped into the night.

All about that cabin, the advance-guard of the forest had set up its barbed-wire entanglement of thorn and leaf, except in one dim path, well worn, that still held some semblance of shape. Holt knew that

little path well; it was the track traveled by the vanished man, Elmer Joy, in his regular trips to the old prospect hole in the ledge, not seventy-five feet away.

He pushed slowly along this path, his heart hammering at his throat, the little torch winking.

Close against the overhanging gloom of the mountainside the flicker of his light picked out a moving gray shape, the gray-flannel shirt of Flint.

Flint was stooped, his head and shoulder thrust into the old prospect hole, his hand groping. At the first touch of light on the rocks about him the groping hand flew to his breast, and he wheeled slowly until he faced Holt.

"Flint, what—say, what in—"

The words died in Holt's throat. He saw, by the bright circle from his torch, that Flint's eyes were closed. His hands, clasped against the open collar of his shirt, dropped slowly.

"Flint! Flint!"

Holt's voice rose sharply and broke into a fearful quaver. Flint's eyelids fluttered and opened. He stared dumbly at the light for a second, started, and exclaimed:

"Hello, hello—yes!"

An explanation of Flint's conduct brought infinite relief to Holt. He became voluble.

"God!" he cried. "You—why, Flint, you been walking in your sleep!"

"Why, yes—that's so," Flint blinked.

"It's you, eh, Holt? Where—what the deuce? Have I gone far?"

"Far enough, on a night like this! Come on back to your bunk, you crazy fool!"

"Where—where'd I go? What is this place?" puzzled Flint, staring about him.

"The prospect hole—Joy's old working. Remember I was telling you?"

Flint shook his head, mystified.

"Darned funny!" he muttered. "Yes, I remember—was wondering about it, in fact, when I dozed off. Sort of mental suggestion, I guess—eh, Holt?"

They walked together back to the cabin, discussing the adventure. Pierce was still asleep.

"Well," Holt exclaimed, with a short laugh, "you certainly beat any sleep-walker I ever heard about. Had sense enough to put on your boots before you started."

"Huh!" muttered Flint, staring at his feet. "Why, so I did! Always was a streak of common sense in our family—"

huh! Well, g' night, Holt, and—much obliged."

Flint crawled back to his bed.

III

"Did you know I'd taken to walking in my sleep?" said Flint to Pierce.

They were cooking the breakfast bacon. Pierce's eyes widened as the other men told the story of the previous night.

"What beats me," said Flint, "is how Holt found me so quick. Knew right how to put his hands on me."

Holt looked momentarily surprised.

"Never thought about it," he admitted; "except it was pure luck. Besides, there's only one trail here that a man could move along with his eyes shut."

"That's so," his companions agreed.

They began packing their blanket-rolls. All were in better spirits; even Flint's quiet manner showed relief at the prospect of leaving.

"Now," said Flint, when they were ready, "we can take the old trail—Joy's trail—and get home about six, or we can keep on across the hills by compass and make it about three thirty or four. What d'you think?"

"Well, I promised the missis—" Pierce began.

"Suits me," nodded Holt. "Sooner I get home the better. I'd give ten dollars, right now, to put on some dry pants and a clean shirt."

"All right, then." Flint consulted the pocket compass that he wore suspended about his neck by a leather strap. "This way," he directed. "I know the general lay of the hills to the west, and we'll keep to the ridges for open timber and easy going."

Gray skies hedged in the hills so closely that they could see but a short way. The loose-knit clouds dragged their skirts over the forest-clad slopes and left long ravelings of their fleece clinging to the tree-tops. Mist alternated with rain, and the soaking underbrush of every ravine slapped at the men until their clothes hung in sodden folds and the chill entered their very bones.

There was no visible life, either feather or pelt, in the sodden woods, only the everlasting monotony of Douglas fir and the drip of water.

Flint took the lead; Holt and Pierce followed in silence, saving their breath for tramping. Their high spirits were gone.

Toward noon they ate their last slices of bread and some cold bacon.

About four o'clock Flint showed the first sign of perplexity.

"Funny the hills don't drop off here," he said. "I don't make this out, boys."

"We're all right," cried Pierce, puffing and steaming. "Can't go wrong with a compass—unless you been walking in your sleep again."

"No fear," said Flint shortly.

"It's getting on," Holt muttered uneasily. "I don't want to miss my supper."

"Yes, and I promised my wife," Pierce cut in. "But I ain't worrying any with Flint breaking trail. You don't see no gray hairs in my head, do you, Holt?"

"It makes dark by five," Flint pondered slowly. "I hope we—well, come on, boys."

It was Pierce who first saw an opening in the forest—a promise of either a precipitous hillside that would give them an outlook, or of a clearing. With a shout he passed Flint, and they saw him mount a ledge of rock. His hail echoed among the trees.

"Clearing, boys! Come on, looks like we had—"

Pushing forward through a thicket of thorns, fighting warily, his arms crooked about his head for protection, Flint stopped, halted in his tracks by the peculiar break in Pierce's words.

"What 'd he say?" he complained querulously. "What's that he said, Holt?"

"Missed it," grunted Holt. "Hey, Pierce, where'd you say we are?"

Pierce made no answer. When they had cleared the thicket, they looked up to see Pierce stooping forward, staring into the cleared space ahead. Something about the fixity of his pose alarmed them both.

"Pierce!" Flint shouted. "Where the devil are we? Lost your voice?"

Pierce turned stiffly.

"You are sure *some* guide, Flint!" he exclaimed.

"What d'you mean?" growled Flint.

He and Holt arrived simultaneously at the top of the ledge and stared ahead.

"My God!" whispered Holt.

Flint's face had gone pasty-gray. His right hand fumbled for the compass hung about his neck. He stared at the quivering needle, trying with both unsteady hands to level the little telltale against his breast. His breath bubbled in his throat.

"Damn the thing! It's gone clean crazy!" he shouted.

Snatching the compass thong from around his neck, he raised his arm as if to hurl it from him.

"Here, look out, you fool!" Holt snatched at the raised arm. "We got to have that."

Flint placed the compass in his pocket without a word. Pierce burst into noisy laughter.

"Some guide!" he croaked. "Bringing us back again to—to Joy's place!"

IV

THE trio stared dumbly into that melancholy, ragged little clearing where the ruined cabin of the lost Elmer Joy huddled forlorn, turning its sightless eyes to the rain-soaked mountains. They could not believe that all that day they had traveled a great circle, completed now by their return to the abandoned claim.

"Well"—Holt paused to swallow a lump in his throat—"well, boys—we're back—again. Let's be making camp in the shack."

"No!" groaned Flint. "I'll stay out here. I—why, yes, you're right, Holt!"

"Of course he's right!" Pierce echoed gruffly. "Who wants to sleep in the rain? Not me! And say, we're going to sleep pretty hungry to-night—just a little bacon, no bread, and only the grounds that are in the coffee-pot for drink."

They took the news in silence. In silence they scrambled off the rocks and down the slope to the cabin. At its gaping door they paused as if by common consent, and stared dubiously into the shack, breathing the taint of its mold.

"Home again!" Pierce forced a laugh. He added unexpectedly, and in a voice that cracked: "I hope I never see this hole again in all my life!"

Dinner finished their scraps of food. The fire burned brightly this night, for they had found better wood, but none of them took any comfort from it. By common consent, unspoken, they avoided discussion of Flint's faulty leadership, though secretly they thought of nothing else. Pierce's several attempts to start conversation died at birth. They sprawled uneasily, their eyes turning back and forth about the cabin. When their glances met, they looked aside in hurried confusion.

"I'm going to turn in," Holt announced.

"It's a hard trip over the old trail, and we've got to make it to-morrow."

He spread his blanket where the shelter of the wall left a reasonably dry floor.

"Me, too," Pierce concurred, and crawled into the lower bunk.

Flint remained staring into the fire with unwinking eyes.

Holt was quickly asleep. Pierce kept turning to Flint with an irritated stare. Finally he spoke.

"For Pete's sake, Flint, roll up in your blanket and quit staring in that—that damnable way!"

"Huh?" Flint roused. "Oh, yes, Pierce—sure, I'm just turning in."

He hastened about the homely task as if anxious to please. Pierce realized with sudden wonder that Flint had ceased to be the leader. Marveling at this, he dozed off.

The room was still light and warm when he wakened at the sound of a voice. Somebody was talking in a low, monotonous, hurried tone. For a second Pierce puzzled to understand words before he stared about.

A man was crouched against the hearth—Flint. He was staring at the floor, and Pierce shuddered to see his eyes so widely open that white showed all about the black pupils. Flint's lips moved, and his voice continued the monologue, but the words seemed formless nonsense.

"Cut it out, you fool!" groaned Pierce, climbing from his bunk, shivering with jangling nerves. "Come out of it, Flint!"

The sleep-walker crouched there, unmoved. He gave no indication that the words had reached his brain.

Pierce seized him by a shoulder, shook him, and slapped his face with an open hand. Every muscle in Flint's body tensed. The wide eyes closed, blinked rapidly, and opened again to a normal gaze.

"Yes, what is it?" muttered Flint drowsily.

He knuckled his eyes and stared about him, gradually comprehending the hearth, himself, Pierce's agitated face. With comprehension he shrank back against the wall, sucking in a sharp, whistling breath, his hands groping behind him.

"Pierce," he whispered, "did I, was I—walking?"

"You certainly were," snapped Pierce. "Come back!"

"Listen, Pierce." Flint grasped his wrist with a cold hand. "What did I do? Did I—"

"Well, nothing. You were huddled up there, looking at the floor, talking."

"Talking?"

"You might call it that. I couldn't make out what you said—gibberish, I guess. You kept staring at the floor all the time—"

"Oh, God in heaven!" Flint's tortured cry startled the crawling flesh along Pierce's spine. "First it was that compass," he croaked. "Look at it—gone clean crazy! It led me back—*here*. Then this! It isn't right. It isn't—healthy! I tell you it's getting my nerve—that crazy compass, this place!" Flint's voice was awful in its slow solemnity. "I wonder if he was right—if there is—"

"If who was right?"

A groan from Holt's bunk interrupted Pierce. Holt stirred uneasily in his sleep. Pierce lowered his voice.

"Forget it and come to bed," he commanded. "That bacon we've been eating is enough to give any man bad dreams, and it's too cold to stand here all night."

"Why, yes, Pierce, you're right. Sure, old man, you're dead right! Roll in, I'm coming soon as I warm up a bit."

Flint crouched over the fire, holding his hands close over the flames. Pierce heard the man's teeth click with chill as he sought his own nest of blankets.

Presently Pierce opened a drowsy eye.

"Flint," he whispered sharply, "don't be a fool. Turn in!"

Flint gave him a long, incomprehensible stare.

V

HOLT and Pierce woke simultaneously.

"What was it?" called Holt.

"Why, it sounded like—I thought—"

A pistol-shot, not far away, stopped their wonderment. They sat up, exchanging stares across the dim room.

"Is he—is *he* up—there? Can you see?" chattered Pierce.

But Holt had risen, run to the door, and thrust his head into the gray light of a rainy dawn.

"Say, Pierce," he called, "come here! There's something—strike a match, will you?"

Pierce made out that Holt held something in his hand—a sheet of paper. He snapped a couple of matches in vain.

"Bring it to the fire," he grumbled nervously.

Crouching together, holding the sheet

close to the dull glow, they made it out. When they had read, their eyes met in a prolonged stare.

Flint had written with pencil on the back of an old letter.

Boys, I killed Joy. He's buried under the floor. It was an old quarrel; never mind what about, but I followed him all the way from California, and I did it, out there by the rocks. Then I hid the knife I did it with in the prospect hole. I thought I was safe all these years, but Holt's remark made me worry about that knife of mine, so I got it last night. You'll find it under my shirt, where I stuck it when Holt thought I was walking in my sleep. I was never sorry about Joy. Don't know that I am now; but, boys, there's something bigger than me, like that compass pulling me back here. It got me in my sleep to-night. I never walked before in my life. All I know is I can't stand it any longer. It's got me. Holt, maybe you were right about divine justice. When you read this I'll know the answer.

They found Flint by Joy's old prospect hole, the scene of that long-ago murder. He had fired two bullets into his breast, and must have died quickly. The compass had fallen, or Flint had taken it from his pocket. It lay on his breast.

Pierce stared down at the body, and an uncontrollable fit of shivering made his teeth rattle. Instinctively he moved close to Holt and laid a shaking hand on his companion's arm.

"Oh, God!" he cried shakily. "Get me away from this place! Holt—Holt, let's go. It's horrible here. It gives me the creeps. Look—look, Holt, that compass on his breast!"

Holt's eyes blazed with fervor. The gesture of his upraised hand was unconsciously dramatic.

"God's vengeance on a murderer," he intoned. "Let no man think to escape the divine wrath. Look, Pierce, it got even Flint." He knelt beside the body and thrust his hand under Flint's flannel shirt. He brought forth a rusted hunting-knife—the knife that had killed Joy, that Flint had concealed among the rocks of the old working. "It lay against his heart," he chanted. "A burden of guilt no man can hope to—"

Pierce leaped back with a yell of terror, his eyes rolling.

"Look!" he cried, pointing a shaking finger. "Look, Holt! It's alive—the compass. It's trying to—follow—the knife!"

The compass-needle was fluttering, instinct with mysterious vitality.

Then Pierce laughed with a sharp,

hoarse, coughing note that somehow expressed triumph. Stooping beside the dead man, he detached the compass from its leather thong. He rose, chuckling hysterically, shaken still by his recent fright, but rapidly regaining his rosy color and his normal outlook on the world.

the north every time Flint looked at it." Triumphantly Pierce demonstrated the attraction between compass-needle and magnetized steel.

"It's a magnet," he chanted. "That's what, nothing but a piece of electrified steel—any kid could tell you that. And Flint, the poor fool, didn't know it. He got scared—and we used to think him the strongest-willed man in the settlement!

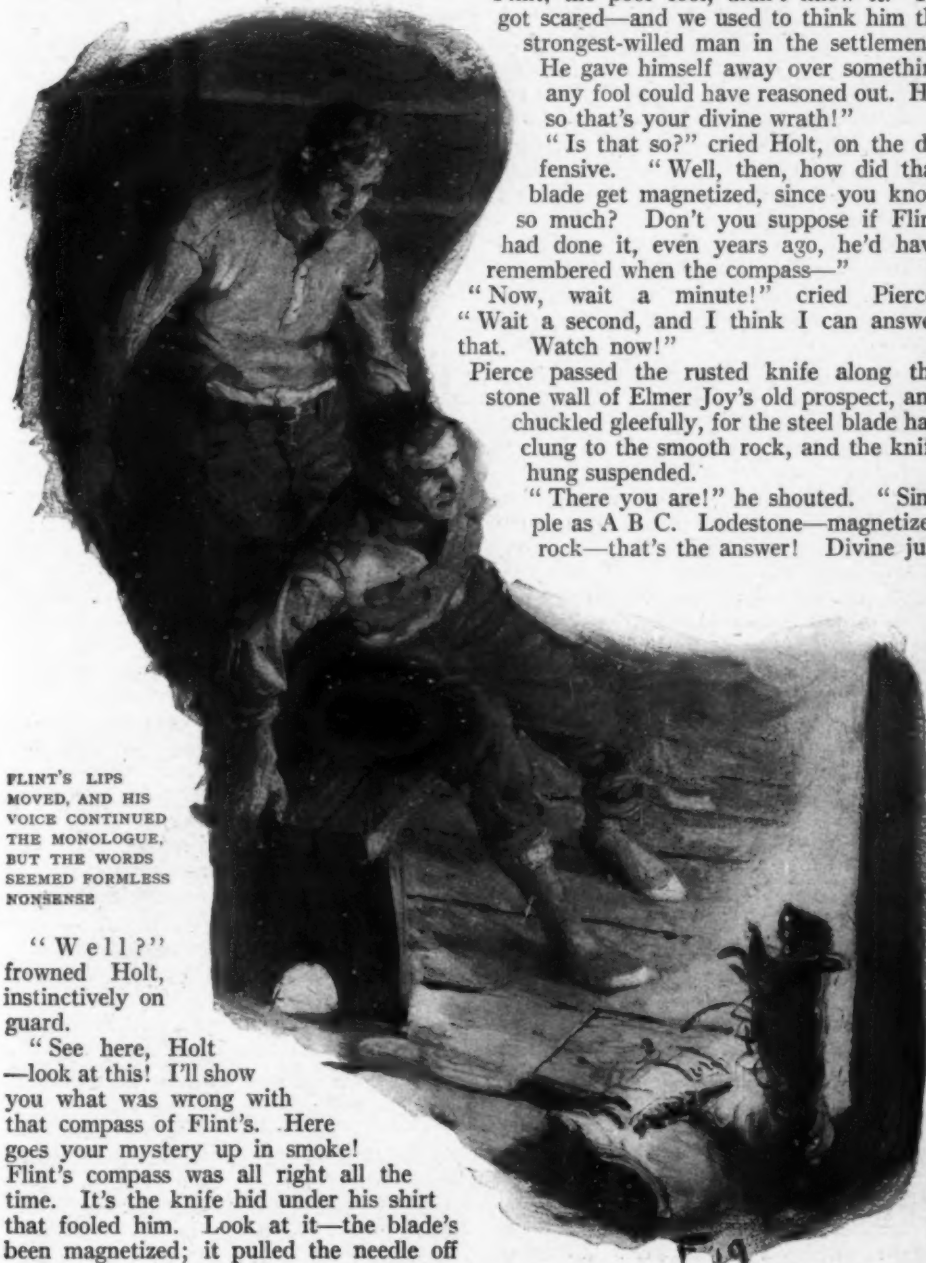
He gave himself away over something any fool could have reasoned out. Ha, so that's your divine wrath!"

"Is that so?" cried Holt, on the defensive. "Well, then, how did that blade get magnetized, since you know so much? Don't you suppose if Flint had done it, even years ago, he'd have remembered when the compass—"

"Now, wait a minute!" cried Pierce. "Wait a second, and I think I can answer that. Watch now!"

Pierce passed the rusted knife along the stone wall of Elmer Joy's old prospect, and chuckled gleefully, for the steel blade had clung to the smooth rock, and the knife hung suspended.

"There you are!" he shouted. "Simple as A B C. Lodestone—magnetized rock—that's the answer! Divine jus-



FLINT'S LIPS
MOVED, AND HIS
VOICE CONTINUED
THE MONOLOGUE,
BUT THE WORDS
SEEMED FORMLESS
NONSENSE

"Well?" frowned Holt, instinctively on guard.

"See here, Holt—look at this! I'll show you what was wrong with that compass of Flint's. Here goes your mystery up in smoke! Flint's compass was all right all the time. It's the knife hid under his shirt that fooled him. Look at it—the blade's been magnetized; it pulled the needle off

tice—murder will out—bunk! Flint hid the knife in the magnetite Joy had mined, and it took on magnetism all the years it was lying there. The magnetism deranged his compass—we traveled in a circle—the poor fool lost his nerve—and there you are!”

Holt stared in slow comprehension. Then the shadow of a triumphant smile twitched his melancholy face.

“All right,” he agreed solemnly. “All right. Then just answer me this, Pierce—who put lodestone in those rocks where murder was done? *Who* put that there?”

The American Invasion of Canada

THE CHANGING RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES WITH ITS GREAT NORTHERN NEIGHBOR—A FRIENDLY OBSERVER BRIEFLY REVIEWS THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE PROSPECT FOR THE FUTURE

By F. A. McKenzie

SEVENTY-FIVE thousand immigrants settled in Canada during the great war. Of these, seventy thousand were Americans. Two generations ago, Canada obtained sixty per cent of her imports from Great Britain. Last year the value of her imports from Britain was \$73,024,016, and of those from America, \$746,937,509.

For untold years, schoolboys living on the borders of Maine and New Brunswick fought their neighbors across the line. There were set battles between the “Yanks” and the “Johnny Bulls.” They raided each other’s summer camps in the woods, and their picked champions were always ready for single-handed contests.

When Canada went to war the border battles ceased. When the call came for more men to take the place of the Canadians who had fallen at Ypres, the older boys of the mill district around Calais, Maine, held long, solemn, secret conferences. Soon parties of two and three started northward to join the Canadian ranks. They did not mind fighting their neighbors themselves, but they objected to others doing it.

I came on one of these Maine boys—I call him “boy” because he could not have been more than eighteen—in the fortified, ruined village of Callonne, north of Vimy, where his battalion was holding the line. He was already a sergeant, and he wore the

ribbon of the Military Medal, earned by a deed of exceptional gallantry.

“Why did you join the Canadians?” I asked him.

“I live in northern Maine,” he replied. “I knew the Canadians. When the war began, we boys in my village talked it over, and made up our minds that the Huns were wrong; so I crossed the bridge at Calais and enlisted. I was not the only one.”

As a matter of cold statistics, there were ten thousand Americans in the Canadian ranks before America came into the war.

The relations between America and Canada are changing. The two people are becoming daily more and more one.

Compare the life of any western Canadian city with that of an American city of the same size. Take Winnipeg, for example. It is built in American style. There are the same kind of sky-scrapers, office-buildings, hotels, and stores. The homes follow the American plan, with central heating, the abundant use of electricity and labor-saving appliances, and the same servant problem.

The citizen eats like an American. He starts his breakfast with grapefruit or apple sauce; he drinks iced water, and even, after the manner of Mr. Bryan, professes to like grape-juice; waffles and shredded wheat are no mystery to him; his club serves him with

imperial squab and hashed-browned potatoes. His daughter is as fond of ice-cream sodas and orange sundaes as is her sister in Washington. The monster store where his wife makes her purchases might be planted down in Chicago and seem to belong to the place. He reads mostly American magazines and novels, and his motion-pictures are nearly all obtained from Los Angeles.

The likeness goes deeper. The system of education for his children is virtually the American public-school system. In civic life the same problems face him. In his recent labor flurry, Chicago and Winnipeg radicals were working hand in hand. He will talk with you about the enforcement of the prohibition law and the hastening of the union of the churches. He will tell you, with glee, how they "cleaned up" in politics, and "turned out the rascals." Just now he is worried over the shortage of housing accommodation, as are the people of most American cities. One finds in him the same fine community spirit, and the same readiness to join up in groups and give unlimited time and energy for public service. Essentially, despite artificial political division, the men of the Middle West are one, whether living north or south of the forty-ninth parallel.

THE CANADA OF YESTERDAY

For more than a century Canada was America's poor neighbor to the north. Her progress was slow. Many of her most enterprising sons, seeing greater possibilities away from home, came south. Had Canada been able to retain her own people as well as those she attracted to her shores, her population to-day would be fully fifteen millions, instead of a little more than half that; but even the immigrants, brought from Europe by intensive advertising campaigns, crossed the border shortly after their arrival.

The attitude of the two peoples was unsympathetic. United Empire Loyalists, who had moved north after the War of Independence, handed down to their children a sense of bitterness. In the Civil War,

America charged Canada with helping the Confederates. Shortly after the close of that war Fenians started out from United States territory to invade Canada.

The Canadian prided himself on his distinctive traditions. It was a sign of loyalty, for example, to use a salt-cellar and a salt-spoon, like the English, in place of shaking your salt from a bottle with a perforated top.

The opening of the West, following the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, marked the commencement of a new era of Canadian prosperity. About the year 1899, the tide of population that had been flowing from north to south, turned. New England farmers found that they could settle their sons on good wheat-lands in Saskatchewan for a quarter of what it would cost them in Minnesota. The procession of America farmers to the Canadian northwest began—a procession that has been growing since then, year after year.

Men soon found that while the other immigrants to Canada formed isolated groups, maintaining their own customs, reading their own newspapers, worshiping in their own churches, Americans, Canadians, and British-born amalgamated at once, became associates in the same clubs, were partners in business. Then came the great war, which sealed the attachment with blood.

The war gave America an exceptional advantage in promoting trade relations. For years high-tariff barriers had separated America and Canada, while Britain had a preference in Canadian markets. The British had very wisely made far-reaching efforts to promote British migration and to increase British trade; but now British manufacturers were too busy producing war material to study oversea markets, and the man who would have been the British immigrant was otherwise engaged in France and Belgium. There was nothing to hinder the flow of American population or trade. Special war-time tariff relaxations broke down some of the barriers.

American enterprises have sprung up

EDITORIAL NOTE—The author of this article is a Canadian by birth, and has long served as chief European correspondent for a group of leading Canadian newspapers. He and Jack London were tent-mates during the Russo-Japanese War, when McKenzie represented the *London Daily Mail*. Later he became editor of the weekly edition of the *London Times*, but when the great war broke out he went to the western front as a correspondent. Last year he revisited Canada from coast to coast, delivering a series of lectures on the war. During the present year he has been investigating economic and business conditions in the United States, and has published the result of his inquiries under the title of "America's Seven-Leagued Boots."

everywhere in Canada. In the city of Toronto alone more than a hundred American manufacturers have branch establishments, as against eight British. The Canadian Club in London is a comparatively small affair, without a clubhouse. The Canadian Club in New York occupies an entire floor of the Hotel Belmont, and is looking out for extensions to its quarters.

America controls the Canadian amusement industry. Canadian newspapers receive most of their European news through the services of the American Associated Press. At least one hundred copies of American magazines sell in Canada for one that is Canadian or British printed. The biggest chain of hotels, outside of those owned by the railroads, is in the hands of an American group.

Canadian labor of the moderate school is knit up with the American Federation: while the men of the more extreme group are promoting, with the radicals of the Western States, the one big union. When I wished to engage a cinematograph-operator in Toronto to accompany me on a lecturing tour, I had to sign terms with the walking delegate of an American union.

Conventions of American business men in Canada, and *vice versa*, are frequent; British-Canadian conventions are very rare. To-day the American farmer is becoming more and more the dominating factor in Alberta and Saskatchewan. And baseball has taken the place of lacrosse as the national game.

Two currents of population can be observed. American farmers continue to flow into the west. Canadian young men, released from military service, are making for American cities, drawn by the high wages offered there. Detroit is their favorite.

"Our young men will not come back to us," said a citizen of a beautiful and prosperous Ontario country town as he drove me through its streets. "We need them. There is abundant work here, and good prospects; but they have tasted life. They demand the excitement and movement of big cities. They go to New York."

The growth of trade between Canada and the United States has been one of the outstanding features of recent years. Geographical position gives the American manufacturer an advantage far outweighing the British preference. Now that the war is over, the British will make determined efforts to recover lost ground, and their

competition will be more formidable than ever before. They have learned lessons of industrial efficiency whose full effects are yet to be felt. The Commercial Intelligence Department of the British government has been greatly improved. A new type of man has been brought in—keen, wisely selected, well paid. The American exporter who attempts to ignore British competition will discover sooner or later—probably sooner—that he has made the mistake of his life.

The handicap of the British manufacturer is distance. The American can place his main factory near the Canadian border and open a branch just over the line. Thus he escapes Canadian import duties. Wage-scales and office methods in both establishments are the same; the one staff does for both. The British manufacturer with a branch in Canada is running two establishments three thousand miles apart, with diverse office methods, scales of wages, ways of work. If he wishes to sell his goods in Canada without a branch factory, he must keep a big supply of spare parts in Toronto or Montreal. The American can obtain spare parts in a few hours from over the border.

The dry-goods merchant in Ottawa or Toronto who wishes to study the new fashions naturally goes to New York, in place of purchasing from the samples of some enterprising British drummer. A night in the train brings him to New York; he looks forward to the journey as a holiday, and he sees and learns more in an hour than he could in a week from any set of samples.

Everything indicates the growth of reciprocity between the United States and Canada. The statesmen on both sides have so far bungled the matter. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, father of the British preference, fought and lost a general election on a reciprocity program. His defeat was in part due to the remark of an American statesman, to the effect that reciprocity would be the first step to annexation.

THE NEW CANADA OF THE WEST

The west is the home of the reciprocity movement in Canada, and the east the headquarters of protection. The east represents the manufacturer and the financier, and the west the farmer. Up to recently, the east dominated; but now every year adds to the strength of the west.

I recently spent a short time in Saskatchewan, the stronghold of reciprocity. No

one could mix with the farmer politicians of Regina without realizing that here are the kind of men who have a way of getting what they want — beefy men, heavy and square-jawed, who keep on and on, till they bear their opponents down by sheer weight and obstinacy.

The manufacturers of the east, realizing the danger of losing their highly privileged position, have been trying by a campaign of education in the newspapers to bring the farmer to their point of view.

"Why should we pay forty per cent more for our farm machinery and autos in order to enrich the Ontario manufacturers?" ask the agriculturists.

The manufacturers publish half-page and full-page advertisements showing that a plow in Arakasha, North Dakota, costs one per cent more than the same plow in Asikisha, Saskatchewan; but the farmer who lives neither in Arakasha nor Asikisha refuses to be convinced.

The present tendency of public opinion in Canada is not overfriendly to the manufacturer. People feel that he had an exceptionally good time during the war, and can afford to suffer a bit. This year, the Dominion government is reducing its duties in favor of the western farmer; but Canada will soon have to face another reciprocity campaign, more formidable than before.

Americans are more and more becoming the farmers, particularly the wheat farmers, of western Canada. It is estimated that sixty per cent of the Alberta farmers to-day are Americans. What is more, they have picked out the eyes of the land. There is a reason.

Twenty years ago skilful advertising campaigns to sell Canadian lands were begun in the United States. Monster excursion parties were organized from Minnesota and Dakota to view the new land. Much of the advertising of Canadian town lots was little better than a swindle, but the farm-lands offered were a good, sound business proposition. During the period from 1901 to 1918, fifty per cent more Americans than British made entry for western Canadian homesteads.

When it came to buying lands, the Americans were often willing to pay a price that seemed extravagant to others. The Canadian had been accustomed to cheap lands. He had been educated on the slogan, "a hundred and sixty acres free." He thought twenty to thirty dollars an acre a

good price for improved farms. The American, coming from more closely settled districts, was willing to pay more. This enabled him to have his pick, and his money is now returning manifold. Last year many farmers earned the equivalent of their entire investment from their crops.

There are still bargains to be found in western lands by the man who knows his business. Here is a case where knowledge is money. The buyer who has to trust to the judgment of others will probably lose.

The farmer is not the only American investor in Canada. The supreme nickel-mine of the world, at Sudbury, Ontario, is owned by a New York corporation. Americans have secured many valuable concessions in British Columbia. The big development of the Atlantic coast in recent years owes much to American capital.

CONTRARY CURRENTS OF OPINION

I do not profess that the growth of Americanism in Canada has been viewed with universal satisfaction there. One strong group regards the *rapprochement* of the English-speaking peoples with suspicion and resentment. Their feeling is directed not so much against the United States as against England. They fear that England may be willing to sacrifice Canadian interests to please America.

"In order to maintain comfortable relations with the United States, the United Kingdom has been indifferent to Canadian interests," recently wrote John S. Ewart, a well-known Canadian publicist.

Twenty years ago Sir Charles Tupper, long the dean of Canadian statesmen, declared in the Dominion House that during the many years he had held office as high commissioner in London, he had been very forcibly struck with the unwillingness of the British government to allow any circumstances whatever even to threaten a collision with the United States.

"They are reluctant to do with the United States what they would do with any other country in the world," he maintained.

"England does not know what she is about," one Canadian representing this small group said to me. "She is bewitched by the glamour of mere bigness. All this talk about English-speaking union is a dangerous delusion. The Yankee will dominate everything. The lion and the lamb may lie down together, but the lamb will be inside the lion, and we are the lamb."

Even a feeble joke on my part that he did not look much like a lamb failed to soothe him.

"Encourage this movement," he went on, "and in ten years the Union Jack will have vanished from this continent. There will be no Dominion of Canada. America will have swallowed it, and Britain will have aided and encouraged her."

In Europe, last autumn, Americans, Canadians, and British were practically as one. Earlier in the year leading officers in the Canadian Corps in France had urged me to do everything that I could to help to have the American troops brigaded for training with the Canadians.

"We like them and they like us," one Canadian declared to me. "They're dandy fighters, and then some. We talk the same language, use the same slang, and have both lived the same kind of life before joining up. We both ought to be together."

In England the same cordiality was universal.

In Canada, when I arrived late in the autumn, the atmosphere was not everywhere so warm. The very closeness of association between Americans and Canadians helps to promote minor friction. There was a feeling that American accomplishments had been overadvertised. And, above all, the Canadians were very, very tired of the American war film.

Nearly the whole of the Canadian film circuits obtain their supplies from the United States. It is only natural that American films, prepared for the American public, drew their illustrations from American sources, displayed the Stars and Stripes at every opportunity, and were unresting exponents of good Americanism. The average Canadian became surfeited with this unvarying American diet.

"Didn't our Canadian boys do anything?" he would shout, when some fresh American war film was shown.

The American producer was not to blame for this. The Canadian market was not big enough for him to prepare special versions for it. It is up to the Canadians to prepare special Canadian films; and now they are doing so.

CANADA A UNIFYING FORCE

The barriers between America and Canada are breaking down; yet, while Canada is ever drawing nearer to the United States, she retains unbroken her sense of association with Great Britain. She stands between the two peoples, not as a separatist, but as a unifying force. Minor friction, serious as it may seem at times, will be ground to nothing. Community of thought and interest are growing all the time.

On more than one occasion, in the early days of the Peace Conference in Paris, the Canadian premier acted as the friendly Anglo-American intermediary, smoothing out temporary frictions. Americans and British both felt that they could talk freely with him and he would understand them. He became the adjuster of differences. Canada may play the same rôle in years ahead, and on a bigger scale.

If Canada is being Americanized, Canadianism is spreading in America. America gave Canada her present high commissioner in London; Canada gave President Wilson one of the leading members of his Cabinet. Each country has much to learn of the other, and each comes to the other bearing gifts.

Canada has for generations been a model to the world in respect for law and order. It is still, in large parts of the Atlantic provinces and in Ontario, the home of the old Presbyterianism and Puritanism. America can open out for Canada greater industrial possibilities. The union between the two lands is more potent than any alliance based on treaty. It is a blending of kindred peoples.

TIME AND MEMORY

THE many things we do and say
Time tries to pilfer in his flight;
But Memory meets him on his way
With outstretched hands and eyes of light.
She looks into his furrowed face,
Gives pause to scythe and hour-glass;
And thus, through her supernal grace,
The vital things can never pass.

William Hamilton Hayne



ONE OF THE GARDEN WALKS AT MELLODY FARM, LINED WITH WHEATLEY ELMS GRAFTED ON ENGLISH ELMS

Mellody Farm, the Country Home of J. Ogden Armour

THE ESTATE AT LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS, WHICH THE WELL-KNOWN CHICAGO MILLIONAIRE IS DEVELOPING BOTH AS AN ORNATE COUNTRY MANSION AND AS A PLACE FOR PRACTICAL FARMING

By Robert H. Moulton

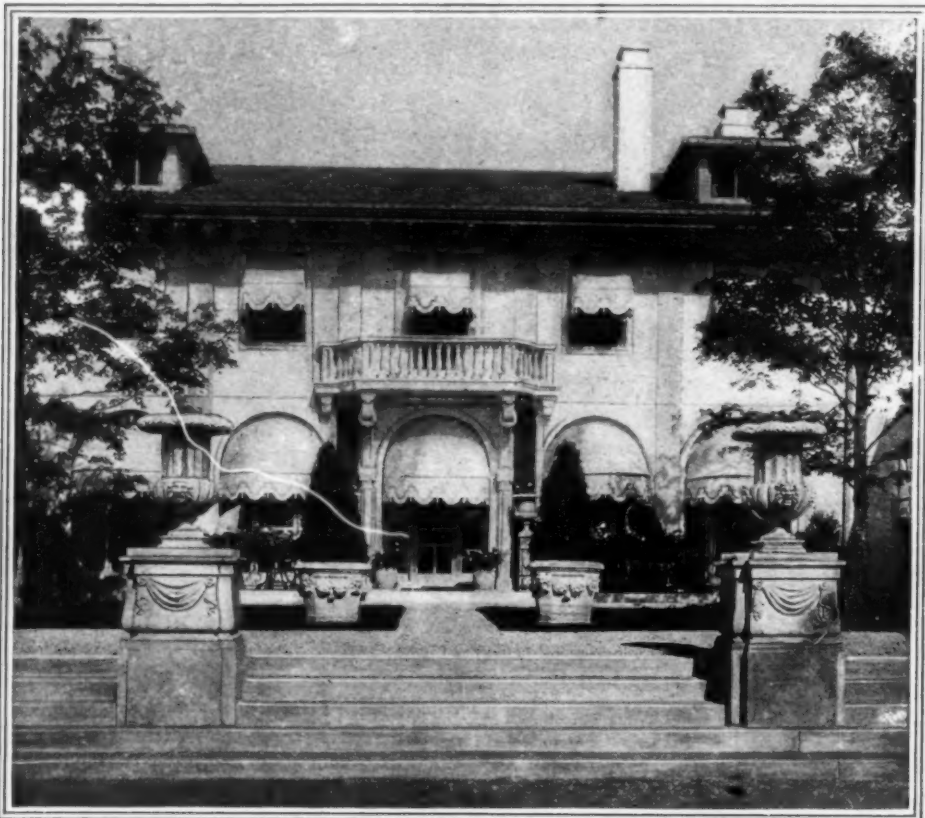
A FEW years ago there were near Lake Forest, Illinois, which has long been a favorite place for the country residences of the wealthy men of Chicago, a number of contiguous farms containing, in all, twelve hundred acres of practically unadorned prairie land. These farms had always led a humdrum, colorless, and somewhat disappointed life; but such are the extraordinary whims of fate that they suddenly, and without warning, became one of the most ornate and highly developed spots in America.

Mr. J. Ogden Armour, whose name is a figure in modern business, not only in America, but throughout the world, chanced to look over this tract of land, and he decided to make it the means of carrying out a long-cherished ambition. His idea was to establish a country place which would not only furnish his family and himself with all the comforts of home, but which would be large enough to supply him with a field for exploitation and development during many years to come; in which, in the intervals of business, or in

case of retirement from active work, he might share the enjoyment that almost every normal man finds in cultivating and improving his own acres.

So he bought the farms in question, and issued a mandate that there should be constructed there a house and gardens in the

has been built, hundreds of gardeners have been tilling, enriching, and beautifying the ground about it, and the choicest trees, shrubs, and plants have been brought from all over the world for its adornment. Around it are gardens, terraces, groves, and lawns, dotted here and there with pa-



MELLODY FARM—REAR VIEW OF THE HOUSE, SHOWING THE TERRACE THAT OVERLOOKS THE WATER-GARDEN

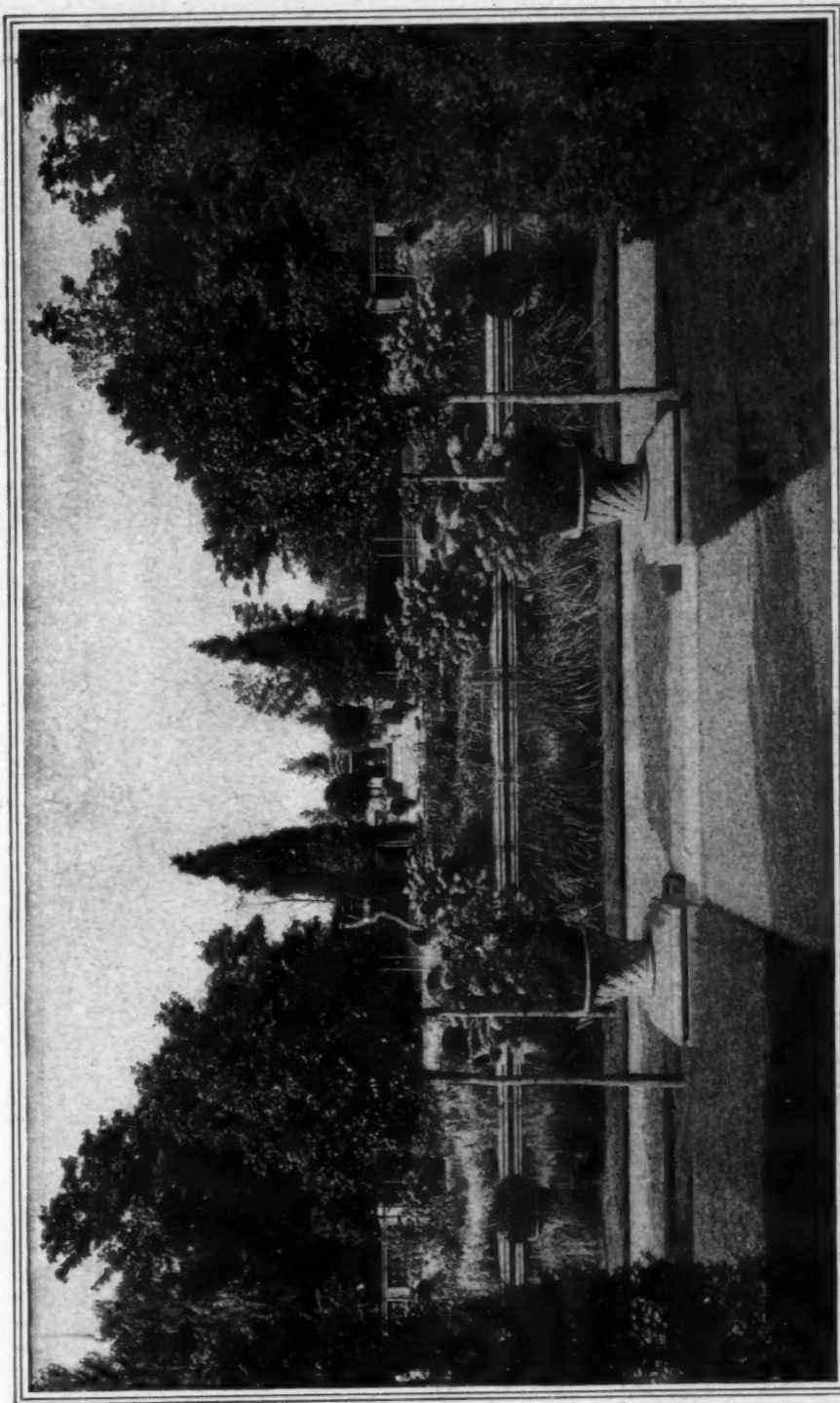
planning of which limitations of cost need not be considered. At the same time he specified that the designers' plan should express ideas of rationality and beauty not less than of modesty and fitness. And, lest his original plan of creating a real farm should be lost sight of, instructions were given that not more than fifty acres of the land should be devoted to the house and gardens. The rest he proposed to cultivate as opportunities offered and disposition inclined.

Much work has been done at Melody Farm since the land was purchased. A remarkably complete and comfortable house

vilions, summer-houses, arbors, pergolas, trellises, and fountains, all in the most effective combination that skill and taste can devise. The estate has a dozen entrance-gates, and within its boundaries are a score of miles of driving roads, while Indian trails, carpeted with tan-bark run through the woods.

THREE STYLES OF GARDEN-PLANNING

When an architect sets about to build a country home of such magnitude as this, he has three general models before him, each of which has its advantages. One plan is that of the Italian villa, built upon



PART OF THE WATER-GARDEN AT MELLODY FARM, SHOWING THE ORNAMENTAL SURROUNDINGS OF ONE OF THE POOLS—IN THE DISTANCE, AT THE
END OF THE VISTA, IS ONE OF THE ENTRANCES TO THE ROSE-GARDEN

a terraced hill, full of fountains and cascades of running water, with covered walks, flights of stone steps, and modern or antique statuary.

The second type of villa is the French.

groups of fine trees, winding drives and paths, yew hedges, and glimpses of water—rivers or ponds—are the central and predominant motives.

Mr. Armour's place might be called a



THE CASINO, A BUILDING OF FANCIFUL DESIGN THAT OVERLOOKS THE WATER-GARDEN—
WITHIN IT, ON A MARBLE TABLE, STANDS A BRONZE STATUE OF MERCURY

The great places in France are as a rule on flat ground, and the French architects, while skilled in formal landscape work, relied more upon their flower-gardens and spreading lawns than did the Italians.

The third type is the English, in which

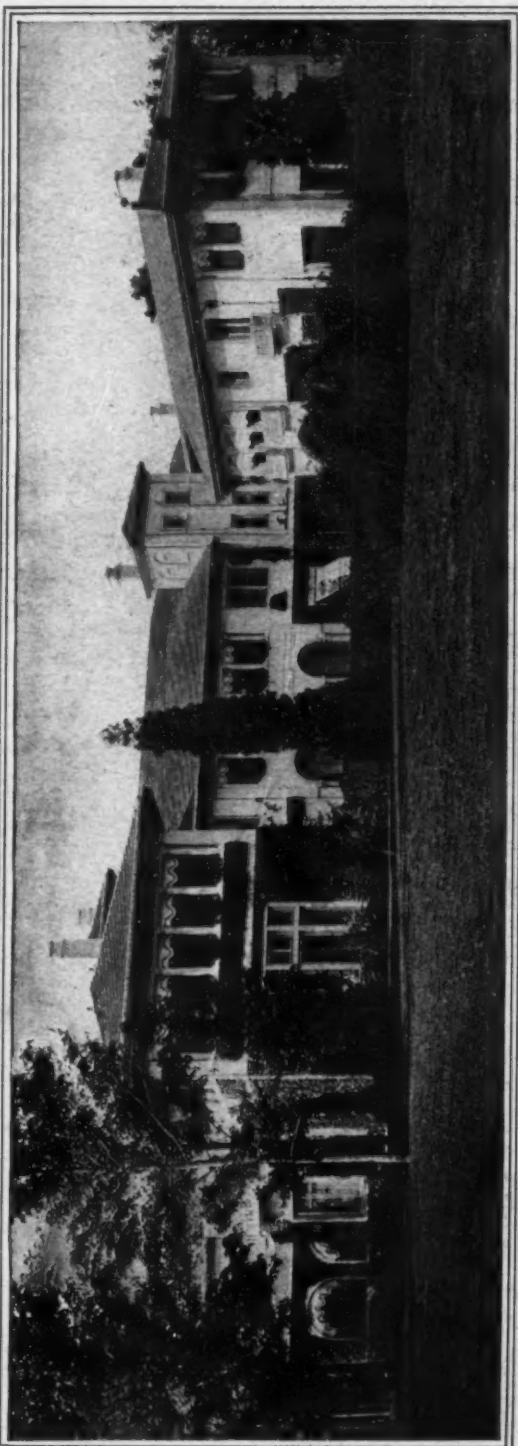
happy blending of these three styles, without exactly paying tribute to any of the so-called historical types. It is a logical rendering of the plans and materials which the architect decided to use, and its undeniable beauty is due to the discreet use of these

materials and the absence of all straining for effect. The note of artistic unity, of a perfectly blended and agreeable ensemble, remains the greatest of the architect's achievements.

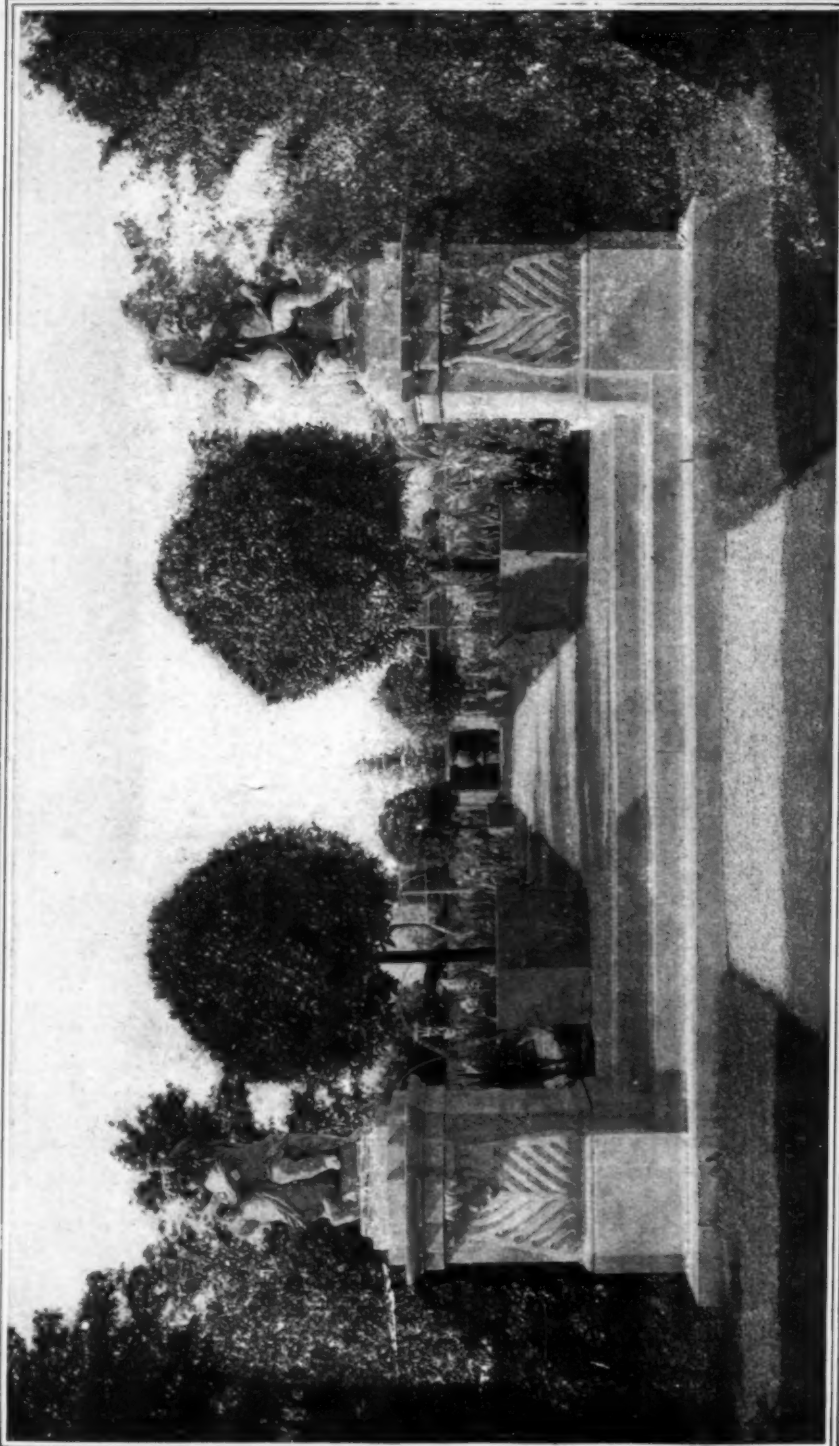
As you drive out from Lake Forest, you are scarcely prepared for what is to reveal itself at Melody Farm. The first view of the estate is obtained from the public road, when the visitor comes upon an imposing entrance lodge and gates. The lodge is of the same design and material as the house. The fine grilled-iron gateway is of Italian design, its shining black being relieved here and there by a touch of gold.

Within the grounds, the driveway leading to the mansion crosses a monumental concrete bridge, built by Mr. Armour, spanning the tracks of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad, which runs through a corner of the estate. To conceal the railroad from view, Mr. Armour built a ten-foot brick wall, which, in turn, is rapidly being covered by a luxuriant growth of ivy. The wall is half a mile long, and cost two hundred thousand dollars.

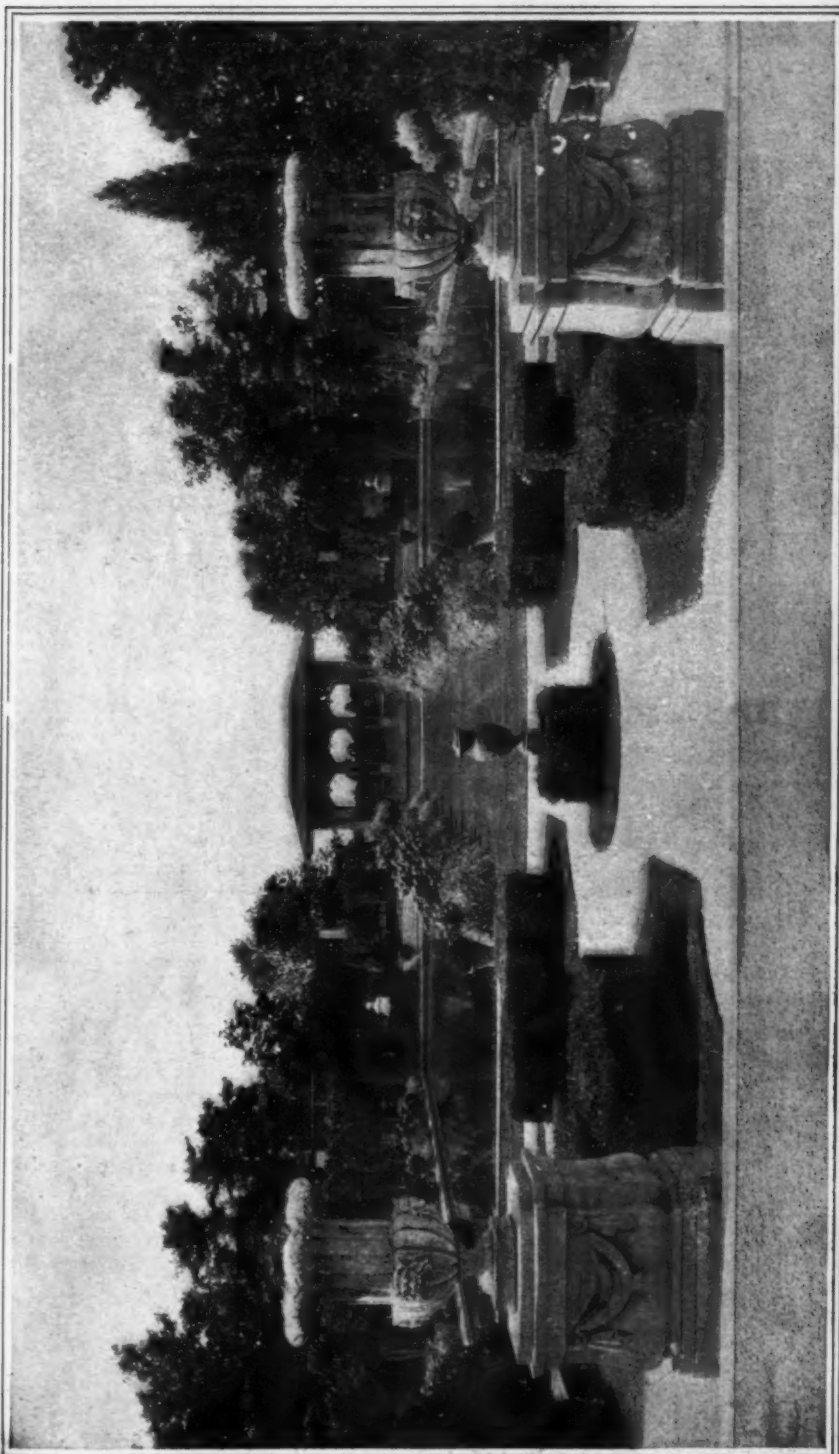
A little way beyond the bridge the road runs through a piece of forest — the only natural woodland on the estate. Then the visitor comes in sight of the house, and a straight stretch of driveway, lined with a wonderful hedge of privet procured from the Amur River, takes him to the north entrance. Here he finds himself in a forecourt with a fountain in the center, around which the road turns in a circle, passing the loggia at the main entrance and continuing right through the *porte-cochère*, which is under the northwest wing of the house, between Mr. Armour's private office and the side entrance. The driveway then continues in a westerly direction toward the stables and the garage.



MELLODY FARM—VIEW OF THE HOUSE FROM THE NORTHEAST, SHOWING THE FORECOURT, THE MAIN ENTRANCE, THE TWO WINGS, AND ONE OF THE OBSERVATION-TOWERS



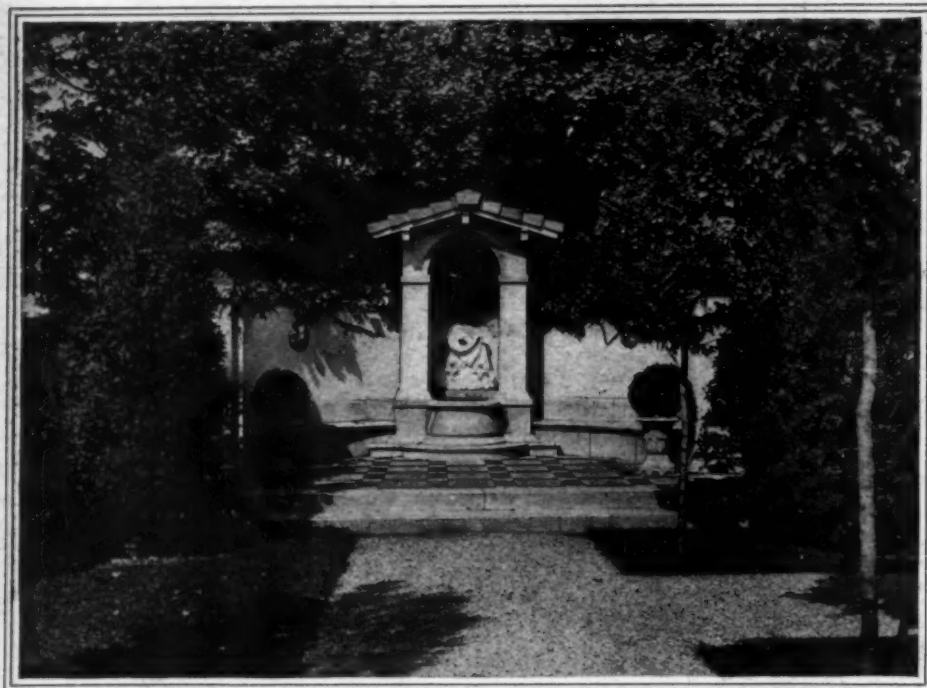
A VISTA THROUGH THE ROSE-GARDEN, SHOWING ONE OF THE ENTRANCES AND FOUR FINE BAY-TREES WHICH COST FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS APIECE



VIEW OF THE WATER-GARDEN, FROM THE LOWER TERRACE—BEYOND THE POOL IS THE CASINO, THE INTERIOR OF WHICH IS SHOWN IN THE ENGRAVING ON PAGE 278

The walls of the forecourt are covered with a foreign vine, *ampelopsis Veitchii*, which is carefully trimmed away from the marble and around the windows. The rooms on the second story extend over the *porte-cochère* and most of the loggias, thus

shaped pieces of white stone, between the edges of which the grass is kept closely cropped, producing a very pleasant and natural effect. The rest-temple is a stucco structure with a latticed roof, supported by four sculptured columns in the shape of



ORNAMENTAL SEAT, WITH A SMALL FOUNTAIN, WHICH OCCUPIES A CORNER OF THE WATER-GARDEN

giving to this story a considerably larger area than that of the main floor. Except for two observation-towers at the corners of the forecourt, there is no third story. Overhanging eaves surround the whole building, and the harmonious relation between the marble-work of the exterior and the stuccoed brick walls, which have the same finish throughout, is one of the features of the house.

Passing now to the east side of the building, we find a vista of velvety lawn, bordered with trees and shrubs, and adorned with small pools and marble benches, stretching away for a distance of a quarter of a mile. At the far end we see a rest-temple, and, just beyond, we get a glimpse of the artificial lake that Mr. Armour has had constructed.

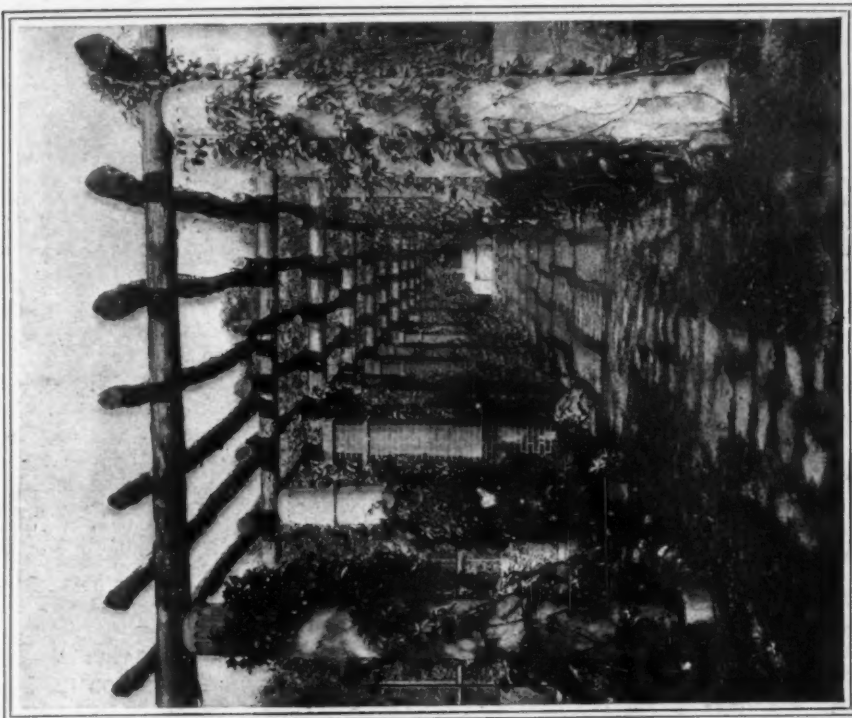
A feature of the walk along this green avenue, and of other walks about the place, is the pavement of roughly hewn, irregular-

figures representing Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn.

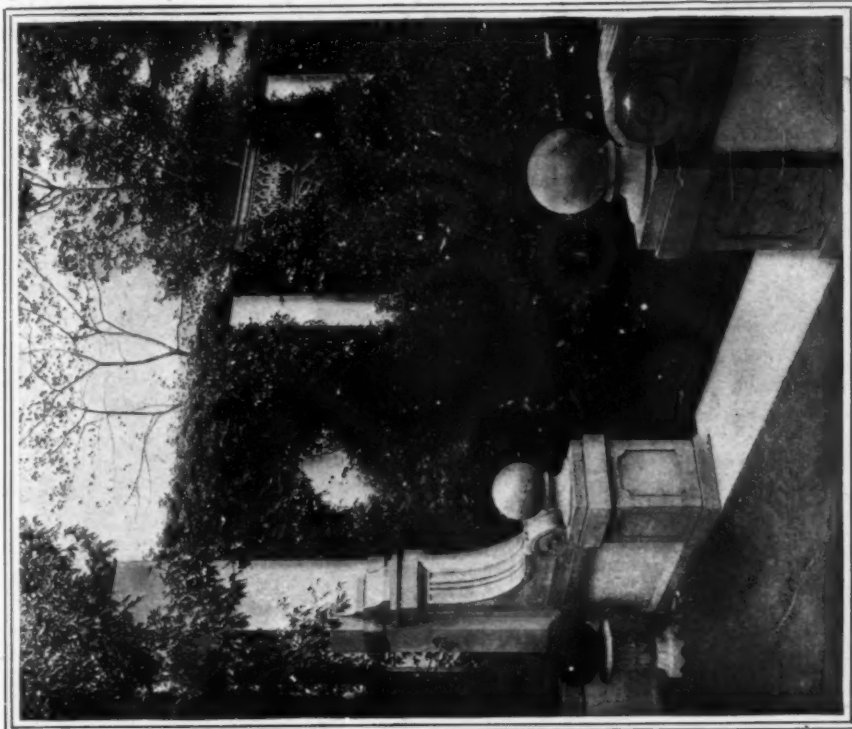
TERRACES AND WATER-GARDEN

Retracing one's steps over this grassy walk, then passing through the winter-garden—a magnificent hall fifty-six feet in length and twenty-four in width, in the center of the house on the south side—we find ourselves on the south terrace, commanding a view of the water-garden. Here man's work is only that of an accomplice of nature. Stretching away in one long perspective, with a casino visible at the extreme end, the water-garden contains three ornamental pools, two near the house, with a carpet of green lawn between, and a third beyond, with a terrace on each side of it leading up to the casino, which stands on a still higher terrace.

Around the pools grow fuchsias, dieffenbachias, irises, abutilons, and tuberous be-



A VINE-COVERED PERGOLA THAT SKIRTS THE PORTION OF THE MELLODY FARM GROUNDS DEVOTED TO CROQUET AND TENNIS



A VINE-COVERED WALL AND ORNAMENTAL STONEWORK THAT FORM PART OF THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE CASINO

gonias, while in the water many goldfish flash and sparkle as they dart among the lilies that bloom on the surface of the water throughout the summer. A variety of shrubs—including several species of spiræa, cornus, and viburnum—are set about in formal groups, while enclosing the whole there is a background of stately lindens, hard maples, and cedars. On each side of the pools, leading from the house to the casino, is a walk lined with Wheatley elms grafted on English elms, a process that produces compact, symmetrical trees with small leaves.

The casino that closes the perspective of the water-garden is a building of stone and terra-cotta, surmounted by a tiled roof with overhanging eaves, and in its design the architect indulged his fancy uncontrolled by the practical conditions which must necessarily prevail in house architecture. Its open sides give an unobstructed view of the sky, with a bronze statue of Mercury, standing on a marble table, outlined against it.

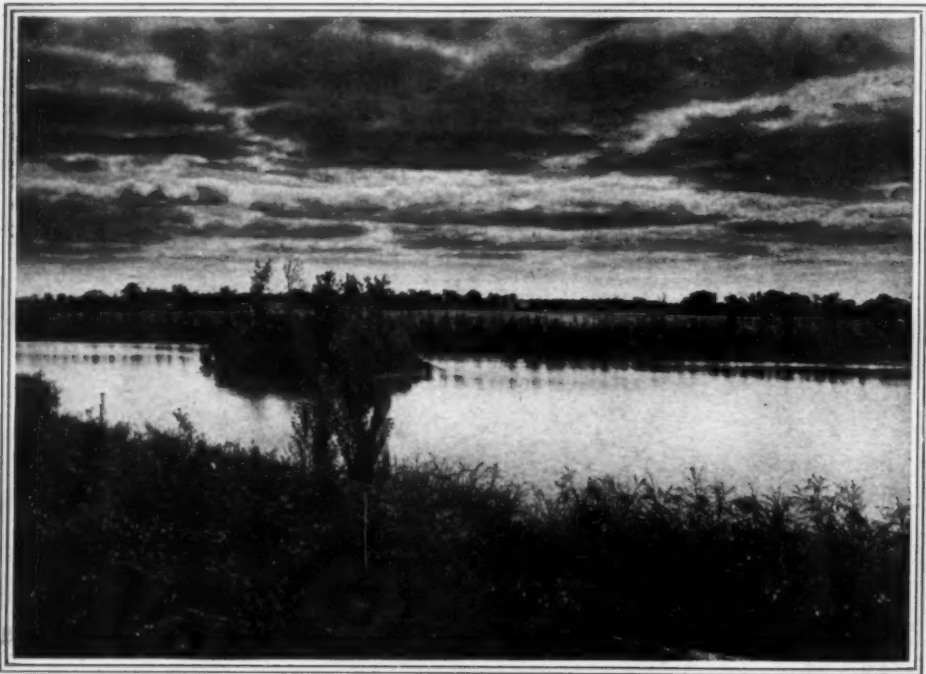
From the windows of the winter-garden, and from the terraces leading down to the water-garden, nothing but sky is visible beyond the casino; but once the casino is

reached, and the visitor turns his gaze to the south, a surprise awaits him. In this direction there is a view across an artificial lake of twenty-five acres, surrounding two picturesque islands, with the open country beyond. Natural springs furnish the water-supply of the lake, and in winter, when the surface freezes, they can be seen boiling up over the ice.

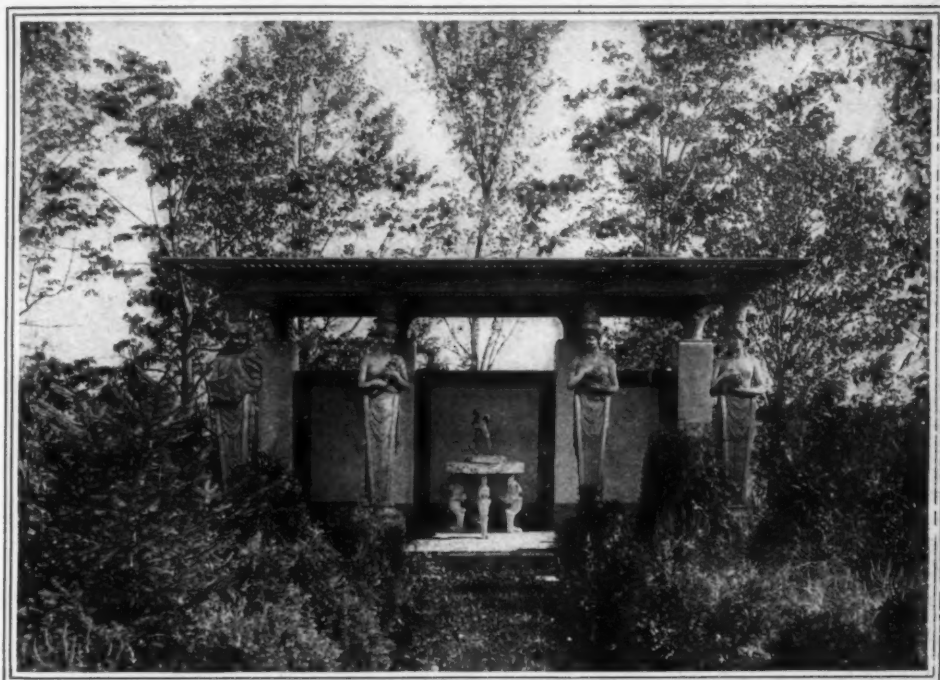
A variety of wild fowl, including mallard ducks, blue-winged and green-winged teal, mandarin and wood ducks, white swans, silent geese, Canadian geese, and demoiselle cranes, make their home around the lake and on the islands. Along the water's edge are planted such trees as willows, alders, and larches, interspersed with thickets of spiræa and viburnum. At the casino end of the tree-lined walks leading from the house are latticed walls, vine-clad and cool, and near them stand two sheltered, semicircular marble seats, each with a small fountain in the center of its high-backed walls.

ROSE-GARDEN AND ORCHARD

As you walk down the path on the left from the casino, you catch the perfume of roses, and a moment later you come to the



THE LAKE AT MELLODY FARM, AS SEEN FROM THE CASINO—THIS IS A SHEET OF WATER TWENTY-FIVE ACRES IN EXTENT, STOCKED WITH MANY KINDS OF WILD DUCKS AND GESE



THE REST-TEMPLE, ONE OF THE MANY ORNAMENTAL FEATURES OF THE GROUNDS OF MELODY FARM—THE FIGURES FORMING THE PILLARS REPRESENT THE FOUR SEASONS

entrance of the rose-garden. Stone steps, with pedestals and statues at each end, lead to this fragrant spot, and just inside it are two bay-trees which cost five hundred dollars apiece, and which are considered the finest and most perfect specimens in the United States. A similar pair stands at the opposite end of this enclosure. A feature of the rose-garden is a series of frames in the shape of open umbrellas over which the roses climb, affording shelter, if desired, from the too-zealous rays of the summer sun. When the roses go, their lovely hues are replaced by the brilliant colors of the gladiolus.

Leaving this enchanting place, one can pass to a Dutch garden on one side, to croquet-lawns and tennis-courts on the other, or, through the far entrance, to the ordered fruit-trees of an orchard garden. At the west end of this last another charming vista looms up. Through an avenue of trees is visible a vine-covered pergola, with a large and decorative tank from which water overflows into a miniature pool where goldfish swim.

In the rear of the orchard-garden are greenhouses, where there is a splendid show

of flowers throughout the year, and next to these a hothouse which furnishes the finest fruits—peaches, pears, figs, and grapes—during the winter months. As yet no permanent farm-buildings have been erected, but now that the war is over, work on these is expected to begin. They are sure to be the last word in completeness and efficiency of arrangement and equipment, a model of what the scientific farm of the twentieth century should be.

Only one more detail of the estate remains to be described. You reach it by a walk of a quarter of a mile to the west. It is a recreation-room which Mr. Armour has had built for the pleasure of his employees.

This is an artistic structure of one story and an attic, in which may be found all the conveniences, and a good many of the luxuries, of a city club-building. There is a noble fireplace in the center of the living-room; there are easy chairs and sofas, book-cases containing several hundred volumes, a billiard-table, tables for the current periodicals, and facilities for preparing and serving meals for as many as one hundred people at a time.

The Last Straw³⁸

THE WINNING OF A GOOD WOMAN IN THE BAD LANDS

By Harold Titus

Author of "I Conquered," "Bruce of the Circle A," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LEE CONREY

THE cow-hands at the H. C. Ranch are surprised when the new owner of the outfit turns out to be an attractive girl, and astonished when Jane Hunter chooses Dad Hepburn to be foreman by ordering the men to draw straws for the promotion. Tom Beck, who would have won had he not refused to draw, declines to drink a cocktail with his new employer that evening. He informs Jane that her cattle are being stolen, that things are in bad shape, and that she will have to live a different life to what she has been accustomed to in New York if she wishes to make good and win the respect of her neighbors. Piqued, Jane sets out to make this taciturn fellow like her.

A New York lover, Dick Hilton, arrives on the scene, rebukes Jane for heeding a rough-neck cow-puncher's puritanical lectures, and finds, to his surprise, that he has lost much of his hold upon the girl.

A slovenly nester, who passes the ranch with a fiery-looking daughter, causes caustic comment among the hands, one of whom, Two-Bits Beal, is anxiously awaiting the arrival of a brother who had become a minister.

At a saloon in town a loafer makes a remark that Tom Beck takes as a reflection upon Jane Hunter's character, and, quick as a flash, he makes the fellow eat his words at the point of a gun.

"You're a queer little yellow-head," Beck says to himself that night, as he looks toward Jane's window. "You're the kind that gets men into trouble, but maybe you're worth it!"

VI

JANE HUNTER was immersed in work up to her trim elbows. She had little time for anything else. Twice again Dick Hilton came to see her, riding a horse on the second visit, but his stays were not lengthy—and not satisfactory, because the girl had little thought for anything but ranch affairs.

For long hours she sat at the desk, which she had placed in a bay window that commanded a superb view of far ridges, and poured over records she had found. She discovered a detailed diary of events for the past ten years, a voluminous chronicle which the old colonel had kept more for the sake of self-expression than as an efficient record, but it served her well as a key to the fortunes of the property.

From time to time she sent for one of her men and quizzed him rigidly on some phase of the work with which he was particularly familiar, never satisfied until she

had learned all that he could teach her. Every evening Dad Hepburn, the foreman, sat with her and discussed ranch affairs at length, Jane forcing him into argument to defend his statements.

While with the girl he maintained his paternal, patronizing attitude; yet he was not content, as was evident from the moroseness which he displayed before the men. He had been stripped of initiative until his authority was reduced to executing orders; this, despite the fact that Jane depended on him for most of her information.

Tom Beck watched the foreman's attitude carefully. Hepburn was chagrined, yet dogged, as if staying on and accepting the situation for a definite purpose. It had been decided, after Jane had argued away Hepburn's objections, that Beck was to have a free hand with the horses, gathering the saddle stock and getting it in shape for the summer's work, breaking young horses, watching the mares and colts. This made it unnecessary for Beck to look to

the older man for detailed orders, and delayed the clash that was bound to come between them.

Jane's approach to her responsibilities was considered admirable by the men, but it occasioned little comment. Their judgment of her was still suspended—that is, with the exception of Two-Bits Beal. Her first look had won him without reservation.

"She's smart!" he declared at frequent intervals. "She's the smartest girl I've ever seen—an' the loveliest!" The last three

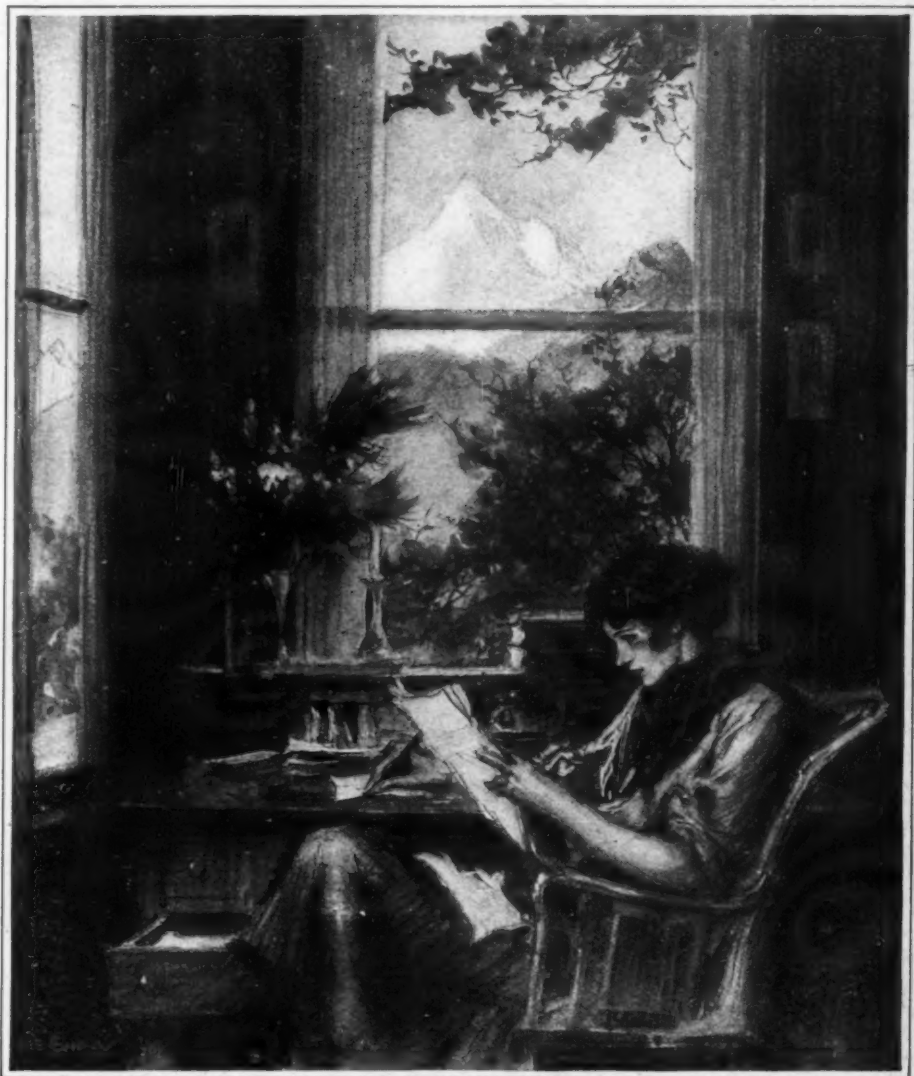
words were spoken with a drop in the voice which provoked laughter.

Once he said to Beck:

"My gosh, Tommy, how'd you like to have a wife like her?"

The other smiled cryptically.

"Now you're gettin' into a profound subject," he said. "It ain't wise to pick out a wife like you'd pick out a horse. There ain't much can fool a man who knows horses, when he looks one over careful like; but there's a lot about women that



JANE'S APPROACH TO HER RESPONSIBILITIES WAS CONSIDERED ADMIRABLE BY THE MEN, BUT THEIR JUDGMENT OF HER WAS STILL SUSPENDED

you can't know by lookin' 'em over and watching 'em step."

He was watching Jane "step," and though he still was the first to listen when others spoke of her qualities, his manner toward her was the least flattering of all.

After she had ridden the sorrel twice, each time accompanied by Beck or Hepburn, she sent Two-Bits to saddle him.

"What you doing with that horse?" Beck asked, looking up from the hoof of a colt which he was gently paring to reveal some hidden infection.

"She wants him to ride," the cowboy explained.

"Goin' alone?"

"Guess so."

"Then take that saddle off and put it on the little pinto."

"But she said to—"

"Makes no difference. You take it off, or I'll make you look like two bits, Mex!"

On finding her order miscarried, Jane demanded explanation.

"Tommy, he told me," Two-Bits said uneasily.

"But I ordered the sorrel—"

"And I told Two-Bits to give you this paint, ma'am," Beck said, the foot of the colt still between his knees.

"Why?" with a show of spirit.

"Because you ain't up to him yet, and he ain't down to you. If somebody was with you, it 'd be different. You can't ride him alone, ma'am."

She gave her head an indignant toss, and was about to demand the execution of her plan, but he turned back to his work, talking gently to the animal. Then, with a grudgingly resigned sigh, she walked toward the pinto, for there was something about Beck that precluded argument.

Again she told him of a contemplated visit to the ranches farther down the creek.

"Why, ma'am?" he asked.

"There are many things to talk over—plans for the summer's work and the like. Besides, I want to become acquainted."

"That last is fine," he said, smiling; "but I guess you'd better wait for the rest."

"Wait? What for?"

"Until you know, ma'am. You see, you've only been here a little while; you've learned a lot, but you don't know enough to talk business with anybody yet. It won't be good for you to go talking about something you don't understand."

"I think I am capable of judging that," she said bruskly. "I will go."

But she did not. She had intended to go the next day, but as she lay awake that morning she told herself that Beck was right—she did not know enough about her affairs to discuss her relationships with neighbors intelligently. She still smarted from his frankness, but the hurt was leavened by a feeling that behind his presumption had been consideration of her own welfare.

She tired quickly in the first days that she rode, and once, remarking on it, she drew this advice from Beck:

"You'd do a lot better without corsets."

Simply, bluntly, impersonally, and with so much assurance that she could not even reply. His observation had smacked of no disagreeable intimacy. She had told him that she tired; he had given her his idea of the cause.

She took off her corsets.

A day of cold rain came on. At noon the downpour abated for a time, and Jane asked Hepburn to ride down the creek with her to look over land that was to be cleared and irrigated.

"Have you got a slicker, ma'am?" Beck asked when she requested that a horse be saddled.

She had none.

"There ain't an extra one on the place," he said; "so I guess you'd better not go."

"But the rain is over. Anyhow, what hurt will a wetting do?"

"I don't guess the rain's all over," he said; "and to get wet and cold ain't a good thing for anybody. It 'd be a mighty bad thing for you. You're a city woman; you can't do these things yet."

An exasperating sense of inferiority came over her, bringing a helpless sort of rage. This man was not even her foreman, and yet he brought her up short, time after time. She started to tell him so, but changed her mind. Also, she changed her plans for the day.

Beck was not rough, not obtrusive, in any of this—just frank and simple; and when she bridled under it she saw that twinkle creep into his eye, as if she were a child and her spirit amused him.

But she did more than amuse. She could not see, she could not know. At night he roused from sleep and lay awake trying to fathom the sensations he experienced. In the daytime he rode without sufficient

thought for the work that was before him. At times he was impelled to be irritable toward her, and this because his stronger impulse was to be gentle.

He did not want to care for his woman, and he found himself caring in spite of himself. He rode to town and spent an evening with a waitress in the hotel, taking her to a picture-show, paying her broad compliments, seeing her pride rise because of his attentions; and he rode home before daylight, disgusted with himself. His life was being reshaped, his tastes, his desires. His caution against taking chances was being beaten down.

Jane commenced to ride with him regularly, and these rides grew longer as she found her endurance becoming greater, until they were together many hours each day; until, in fact, escorting her had become Beck's job. The ostensible purpose of this was to learn the country; and the manner of range work, but though she did learn rapidly their talk was largely personal. Beck was not responsive, and the more reserved he became the greater were Jane's efforts to force him to talk of himself.

These efforts netted her little, and after a time she abandoned them and adopted other means of winning his confidence.

Once she helped him gather a bunch of horses that had not been corralled for seasons. The way led down a steep point, and Jane was ahead, holding up the bunch while Beck crowded them from behind. She took the descent with a degree of hesitation, for the going—so steep that she was forced to clasp a hand behind her cantele to retain a seat—chilled her with fear. On the level she fanned the sorrel and kept ahead of the horses until she could lead them safely into a corral.

The gate closed, Jane looked at Beck with sparkling eyes, expecting a word of reward, but he only said:

"You've got to keep goin' with horses. The country's all got to look level to you. You slowed up bustin' off that point."

The rebuke hurt her—and stimulated her ambition.

He taught her to use a rifle, and she brought down her first deer, a yearling buck, at long range.

"I told you to hold just behind his shoulder; see where you hit," he said, indicating the wound, a handbreadth too far back.

She shot with his revolver, and he told

her that she would never learn to use the weapon. She bade him teach her the rudiments of roping, and he decried the feminine movements of arms and body.

In all this he was quick to criticise, niggardly of praise; ready to teach, reluctant to grant progress.

She was resentful, but her resentment was no match for her determination. Now and then his rebukes whipped flushes to her cheeks, and more than once she left him with tears standing in her eyes, only to tell herself aloud that she *would* make him acknowledge her accomplishments.

Once, riding on alone after Jane had turned back toward the ranch, Beck encountered Sam McKee. The man had dismounted and was recinching when Tom passed him. He looked up with a baleful expression, as if he was impelled to do the H. C. rider great harm and was held back only by his cowardice. When Tom had passed, McKee mounted, and before he started on his way he turned to shout over his shoulder:

"Chaperon!"

In it he put all that contempt which small, timid boys put into their shouted taunts.

Beck was not angered, but it gave him something to think about.

Another time as, on his roan, he led the sorrel toward the gate to the house-yard, Hepburn smiled at him and said with scornful humor:

"A regular chaperon, ain't you?"

Tom did not reply, though it angered him. He thought about the remark at length, but the thing which interested him was that Hepburn had used the same word that McKee had used. Was that, Beck asked himself, mere chance?

They had ridden far to the eastward one afternoon, and, returning long after dark, Jane made a meal herself, and they ate together at her table. Beck was noticeably restrained, and hastened to leave as soon as he had finished.

"Can't you sit and talk with me a while?" she asked.

"I could, ma'am, but is it necessary?"

"Not necessary to the business, perhaps; but it might be necessary to a pleasant evening for me."

He gave her steady gaze for steady gaze, and then said:

"Anybody would think you were courtin' me, ma'am."

She laughed easily, yet her gaze wavered.

"And what if I should be?" she asked.

This disconcerted him, but he replied:

"It's likely I'd quit."

"I'm—wholly distasteful to you, then?"

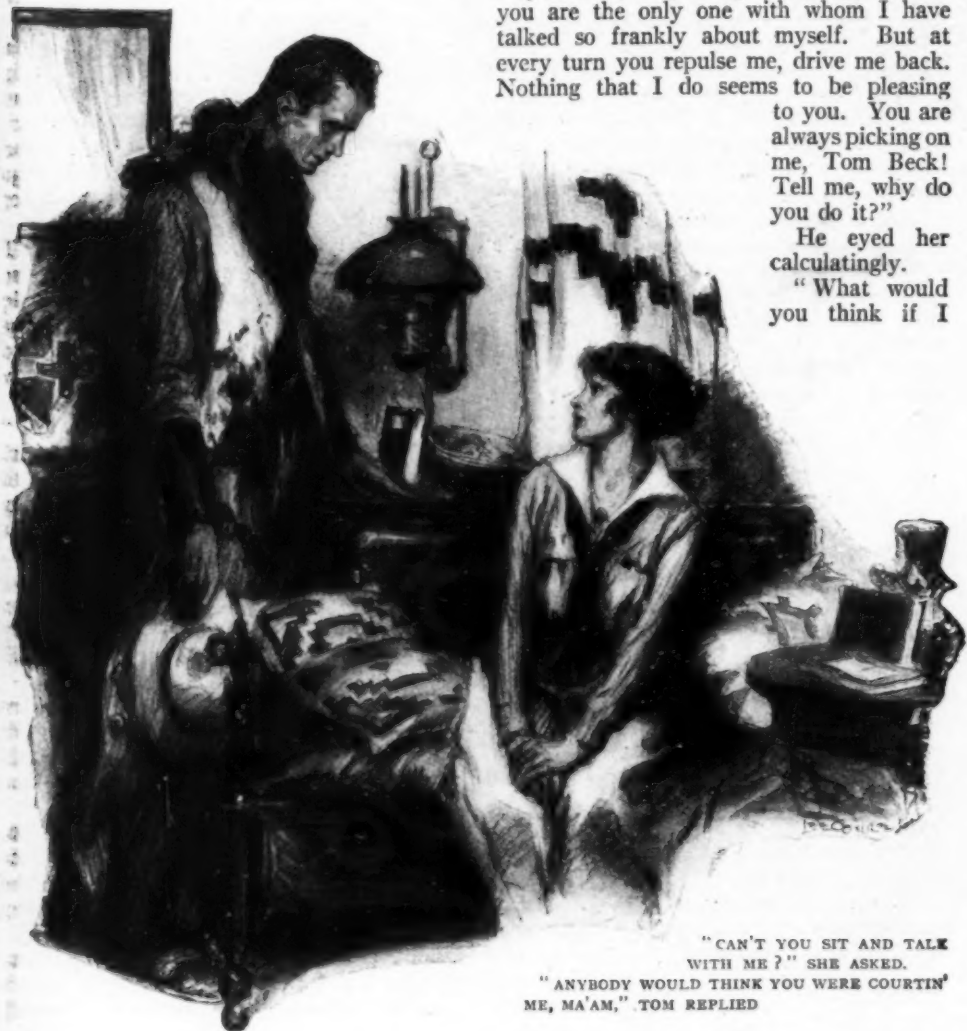
"If I was to say yes, it 'd hurt your

"The first time you talked to me at any length you had a great deal to say about respect. No one had ever talked to me as you did. I took it because it was true, and I respected you. Since that time I have been trying to be worthy of the respect of you men; of yours particularly, because you are the only one with whom I have talked so frankly about myself. But at every turn you repulse me, drive me back. Nothing that I do seems to be pleasing

to you. You are always picking on me, Tom Beck! Tell me, why do you do it?"

He eyed her calculatingly.

"What would you think if I



"CAN'T YOU SIT AND TALK WITH ME?" SHE ASKED.

"ANYBODY WOULD THINK YOU WERE COURTIN' ME, MA'AM," TOM REPLIED

feelings, needless; so I won't. I don't mind tellin' you, though, that the country is callin' me your chaperon."

"And does what people say worry you?"

"Not when they talk about something that I'm responsible for. I didn't hire out as a companion, ma'am."

She stepped closer, her hands behind her, and said:

told you, ma'am, that it was because I don't like you?"

"I would think it was not the truth."

He flushed, and this time his eyes fell from hers. She took another quick step forward.

"I would think just that, but I might be wrong." She breathed rapidly, one hand on a gold locket that was at her throat.

"I might think that you fear that becoming my friend would be dangerous, but I might not want to think that. You were the first man who ever dared tell me just how little I have amounted to. You are the first individual that ever made me feel ashamed of myself. You did those things; you opened my eyes, you showed me what real achievement is. Now I'm fighting for a place. I have won one thing—my self-respect. Now I'm going to win another—the respect of other people; and if I can win their respect I can win their friendship. I may be overconfident. Time will prove that. But there is one thing I want, Tom Beck, and that is your friendship. Before I get through, and if I succeed, you are going to be glad to be my—friend!"

There was challenge in her tone, which, with all its assurance, was sweet and gentle, almost appealing; and that combination of qualities indicated that her words did not express her whole thought. It steeled him, and with that mocking twinkle again he said:

"You seem quite sure, ma'am!"

"As sure as I have ever been of anything in my life."

But her assurance did not compare with her desire, for when he had gone she was seized with the fear that she had said too much, had gone too far. And that which she had boasted would be hers was to Jane Hunter a precious possession.

VII

At sunset a girl rider descended from the uplands into the shadows of Devil's Hole. The big brown which carried her picked his way slowly down the treacherous trail, nose low, ears forward, selecting his footing with care.

The girl sat braced back in her saddle. Her face was dark, her eyes brooding, but her mouth, though sternly set, showed a rueful droop at the corners.

Her mind was not on her progress. She was lost in a very definite consideration—something which stirred resentment, it was evident from her face. Finally she drew a sharp, deep breath of impatience.

"Oh, get along, you dromedary!" she muttered, and roweled her horse sharply.

The big beast sprang forward with a grunt, and went down the trail in long, shaking bounds. When they reached the level he crashed through the brush at a high lope, leaping little washes with great

lunges, and bearing his light rider swiftly toward a cabin from which a wisp of smoke curled.

A discouraged-looking man stood before the doorway watching her come, and as the girl swung down before the horse was well halted she flashed a quick smile at him.

"I heerd you comin', daughter, away back thar. I shore thought the devil himself might 've been after you!" He smiled wanly.

"I seen her again," the girl said as she dragged her saddle off.

The man pulled languidly at his mustache before he spoke.

"She see you?" he inquired.

"No. I set under a juniper and watched 'em—her an' that Beck man."

"Mebbe if you was to talk to her—an' get friendly—"

"I don't want to be no friends with Jane Hunter. I hate her already!" She spat out the words, and her face was a storm of dislike.

"What I meant—mebbe 'twould be easier for us if you played like you was friends. Then she mightn't suspect."

The girl rolled her saddle to its side and spread the blanket over it.

"No. I can't do things thataway, Alf," she said with a slow shake of her head. "Mebbe 'twould get us more, but there's somethin' in me, in here"—a palm to her breast—"that won't let me. I can steal her blind an' only be glad about it, but I couldn't make up like I was her friend while I done it."

"Mebbe you sure-enough would like her," he persisted. "You ain't never had no friends—"

"I'd never like her, not while we're this way"—with a gesture toward the litter about the cabin. "She's got all that I want. She's had all the things I've never had. She's got lots of pretty clothes; she's lived in towns an' has always had things easy. She's got friends and folks to respect her. You can tell that by lookin' at her. What makes me that way, Alf? What makes me hate folks that have got the things I want?"

Alf pulled on his mustache again and scanned the scarlet sky which rose above the purple heights to the westward. He shook his head rather helplessly and then looked at the girl who stood before him, the eagerness of her query showing in her eyes with an intensity that was almost desperate.

"Mebbe you get it from me. I've always had it. That's all I have had—that an' hard luck."

"But I don't like it!" she said, and in her tone was something of the spirit of a bewildered child. "I'd like to be like other girls. I'd like to have friends, girl friends, but the more I want 'em, the more I hate those that have 'em! What's the matter with me, Alf?"

"The same thing that's the matter with me, daughter—hard luck. I've wanted things so bad that not havin' 'em has soured me. I've watched other outfits grow big an' rich, an' nothin' like that has ever come my way. The bigger the rest got, the harder 'twas for me to get along—an' the worse I hated 'em!"

There was no iron in his voice; just the whine of a weakling, dispirited to a point where his resentment even at ill fortune was a passive thing.

"She's got a fine house to live in, an' I'll bet she always had. She's never knowed what it was to set out a norther in a wagon. She's never lived on buckskin an' frozen spuds all winter. She's never been chased from one place to another. Folks respect her for what she's got. Why don't folks get respected for just what they are?"

There was pathos in that query.

"It ain't what you are that matters, daughter," the man replied. "It's what you own."

"You've always said that, ever since I can remember. Mebbe if you hadn't said it so much, Alf, I wouldn't feel like I do."

"He shifted his footing uneasily and looked again at the flaring sky.

"Well, it's so," he whined. "You'd have found it out yourself. I've brung you up the best I knowed how."

"Oh, Alf! I didn't mean I was findin' fault! Damned if you *ain't* brought me up good! Why, you're the only friend I got, Alf! What 'd I do without you? You're the only one I've ever knowed real well. You're the only one who's ever been good to me!" She put her hands on his shoulders and looked into his face with a smile of genuine affection. "Good old Alf! We've been pals, ain't we?"

He nodded.

"An' if you stick to me a little mite longer, you'll have enough," he said. "You're brighter 'n I be, daughter. You got a longer head. Now's your chance to use it!" He looked about, somewhat

nervously, as if they might be overheard. "Sometimes I get afear'd. Lately, since we've come here, I've been afear'd. It's the only time I ever let anybody else know what my plans was, an' it makes me feel creepy to think somebody else *knows*!"

"'Fraid of what, Alf?" she asked.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Gettin' caught again, an'—"

"Oh, but you won't! You can't." She spoke in a whisper and gripped her fists for emphasis. "Alf, you can't get caught an' sent to jail an' leave me alone again."

"I shore don't want to leave you, daughter. I shore don't want to get caught. That's where you come in—helpin' me scheme. I ain't afear'd of havin' 'em come up on me an' git me red-handed so much as I am of havin' somebody else know what's goin' on."

"But he sent for us. He told us the outfit was goin' to be owned by a tenderfoot. He's as much in danger as we, ain't he?"

Her father nodded slowly.

"You're right, in a way; but if it ever come to a show-down, I'd be the one to hold th' bag, wouldn't I? That's what we got to watch out for. Course, it's easy pickin', with this gal tryin' to run things herself, an' what with her brand workin' over into ourn so easy, there ain't many chances—except havin' somebody else know."

"If anybody ever was to double-cross you, Alf, I'd get 'em, if it was the last thing I ever done!"

Though she was but a slender girl, that threat carried conviction. Her father looked at her with a rare brand of admiration in his eyes.

"Lord, daughter, sometimes I think you was meant to be a man an' a hard man. Sometimes you almost scare me, the way you say things."

She made no reply, and he went on:

"All we got to do is go slow. A brand-in'-iron has built many a fortune, an' nobody ever had it any easier 'n us."

"Do you think we'll ever get rich enough, Alf, to have a regular house, an' be respected by folks?"

"Luck's bound to change some time," he muttered. "Ours has been bad a long, long time."

He gathered an arm-load of wood and entered the cabin. The girl stood alone outside, watching the brilliant flowering of the sky sink slowly into the west, drawing steely night to cover its garden. A sharp star

bored its way through the failing light and stood half-way between earth and heaven. A vagrant breeze slid down the creek, bringing with it the breath of sage, and afar off somewhere a cow bawled plaintively.

"She has 'em," she muttered to herself. "Friends an' respect an' everything I want. I wonder what makes me hate folks so!"

VIII

THREE weeks after her arrival Jane made her first trip to town, and Beck drove the pair of strong bays which swirled their buckboard over the road at a spanking trot.

Events had arisen to prevent them being together in the days immediately following the frank discussion of their attitudes toward each other, and Jane thought that she detected a feeling of curiosity in him, as if he wondered just how she would go about forcing him to like her. Shrewdly, she avoided personalities and talked much of the ranch.

When they broke over the divide and began the long drop into town, he said:

"Since you asked advice from me, I keep thinkin' up more, ma'am."

"That's nice. I need it. What now?"

"I s'pose dad mentioned that water in Devil's Hole?"

"Why, I don't recall it. We've talked so much and about so many things that perhaps it's slipped my mind."

"Maybe. He said he had."

She questioned him further, and he said it might be well for her to mention it to Hepburn.

"He's foreman, you know."

They swung into the one street of Ute Crossing and stopped before the bank. As Beck stepped down to tie the horses, a girl came out of a store across the way and vaulted into the saddle on a big brown horse with graceful ease. It was the nester's daughter.

Two men came from the saloon just as she reined her horse about. They eyed her insolently with the typical loafer's stare, eloquent of all that is despicable; and one of them, a short, stodgy man, smiled brazenly.

The girl gave them one stare, hostility in her brown eyes, and then looked away, her lips moving in an unheard word, surely of contempt.

Then the man spoke. It is not well to repeat. His words were few, but they were ugly. The girl had touched her horse with

a spur, and he leaped forward—just that one bound. As he made it, the man spoke, and with a wrench she set the brown back on his haunches and whirled him about. Her face was suddenly white, her lips in a tight, red line, and her eyes blazed.

She rode back to the men, who had continued on their way, holding her horse to a mincing trot, for he seemed to have caught the tensify of her mood.

"Did I hear you right?" she said to the man who had spoken.

He stood still and looked up with the rude leer.

"That depends on your ears, likely. All I said was that you—"

She did not give him time to repeat. Her right arm flashed up, and the quirt slung to its wrist hissed angrily as it cut back and with a stinging crack wound its thong about the man's face.

"Take that!" she cried. "And that—and that!"

At the first blow the man ducked and turned, throwing up his hands to guard; and as other slashes, relentless, rapid, of scourging vigor, fell upon his head and face and neck, he doubled over and ran for the shelter of a store. But the girl's wrath was not satisfied. She sent the big horse from street to sidewalk, where his hoofs thundered on the planks, crowded in between her quarry and the building fronts, cutting off his flight, striking faster, harder, her teeth showing now between her drawn lips.

The man fled into the street again, but she followed, guiding her horse without conscious thought, surely, for no woman roused as her face showed she was roused could have had thought for other than the thrashing she was administering. Endangered by the excited hoofs, which were all about him as he vainly ducked and dodged, the man ran with hands and arms close about his head, moving them with each blow that fell, in futile attempts to save other parts from the cut and smart of that rawhide.

The girl uttered no word. All the rancor, all the rage he had roused by his insult, found vent in the whipping. Her whole lithe torso moved with each stroke as she put into the downward swing all the strength she could command. Across the man's cheek rose broad red welts, contrasting with his pallor of fright, until his face looked like a fancy berry pie.

Scuttling, dodging, doubling, the man worked across the street, turning back time

and again. With a cry of pain and desperation, he threw out one hand and caught the girl's bridle. In the instant's respite the move gave him, he stumbled to the other sidewalk, across it, and through the swinging doors of the saloon that he had left a few moments before.

The horse came with a halt with a slam against the flimsy front of the building. The girl drew back her quirt as for a final blow, but the man, regaining his feet, fled through the barroom and disappeared. She dropped her hand to the top of the door, pushed it open, and held it so, peering darkly into the room.

People had come into the street to watch. There had been excited shouts and a scream or two; but as the girl sat looking into the place a quick silence shut down. When she spoke, her voice, trembling with emotion but scarcely raised above its normal pitch, was easily heard.

"I've took a lot from men," she said, "ever since I was a kid. When I come into this country I thought maybe I'd get a little respect for bein' just a girl. I didn't get it; I've got to take it. If that man's a sample of the kind you've got here, you're a nest of skunks! Talk easy hereafter, every one of you, because so long as I've got a quirt and an arm, I'll hide you till you're raw if you make any breaks like he did. Keep that in mind!"

She released her hold on the door; it swung outward smartly, and as it struck the horse he sprang sidewise, wheeled, and, clearing the shallow gutter with a lunge, swung down the street at a gallop.

When the girl passed Jane Hunter, who stood amazed in her buckboard, tears showed in her eyes, but her back was as erect, her shoulders as trimly set as if no great emotion was surging in her heart.

"She's quite a catamount, I'll guess," said Tom Beck as he gave the knot in the tie-rope a securing tug and turned to face Jane. His eyes were fired with admiration.

"But a girl—"

"She was magnificent!"

It was Dick Hilton who had interrupted. Beck looked at him, and the enthusiasm which had been in his face faded. He eyed the Easterner briefly and turned to adjust a buckle on the harness.

"And only a girl!" exclaimed Jane under her breath. "Dick, did you see it all?"

"A typical Western girl, I should say," he replied. "Your neighbor and associate?

Your companion, Jane?" he asked. "The sort you want to cast your lot with?"

"A moment ago you thought her magnificent!" she taunted as she stepped down and offered him her hand.

"I'll meet you in, say, two hours, ma'am," Beck said.

"Very well—right here," she replied, and he left her as she turned to meet Hilton's unpleasant smile.

Beck and Jane began the return trip shortly after noon. Hilton had been with Jane when Tom returned, and he stood beside the buckboard talking for some minutes after Beck had picked up the reins and was ready to commence the drive. Occasionally Dick's eyes wandered from Jane to the other man's face, but Tom sat, knees crossed, idly toying with the whip, as indifferent to what was being said as if the others were out of sight and hearing.

Hilton made an obvious effort to exclude the Westerner, but Beck's disregard of him was as genuine as it was evident. He sat patiently, with an easy sense of superiority, and the contrast was not lost on Jane Hunter.

The town was far behind and below them, a mere cluster of miniature buildings, before either spoke. Then it was Jane.

"That girl—there was something splendid about her, wasn't there?"

"There was," he agreed. "She sure expressed her opinion of men in general."

"A newcomer, evidently."

Beck nodded.

"Came in soon after you did, with her father, it looked like."

"And she wins the respect of strange men by blows!"

"He deserved all he got, didn't he?" Beck asked, smiling. "I like to see a bad *hombre* like that get set down by a woman. There's something humiliating about it that counts a lot more than the whippin' she gave him."

"But wouldn't it have spoken more for the chivalry of the country if some man had done it for her?"

"That's likely. But there ain't much chivalry here, ma'am."

"And am I so fortunate as to have enjoyed the protection of what little there is?" He looked at her blankly. "I had to come to Ute Crossing to learn how one man defended me from the insult of another."

He stirred uneasily on the seat.

"That was nothin'," he growled. "I'd been waiting for a chance to land on Webb for a long time."

He did not look at her, and his manner had none of its usual bluntness; clearly he was evasive and, more, uncomfortable.

"First, I want to thank you," Jane said after she had looked at him a moment. "You don't know how a woman such as I am can feel about a thing like that. I think it was the finest thing a man has ever done for me—and many men have tried to do fine things for me."

She was deeply touched, and her voice was not just steady; but when Beck did not answer, and looked straight ahead with his telltale flush deepening, a delight crept into her eyes and the corners of her pretty mouth quirked.

"Besides, it was a great deal to expect of a man who has made up his mind not to like me!"

They had topped the divide, and the sorrels had been fighting the bits. As she spoke, Tom gave them their heads, and the team swept the buckboard forward with a banging and clatter that would have drowned words anyhow; but the fact that he did not reply gave Jane a feeling of jubilation. Her thrust had pricked his reserve, showing it to be not wholly genuine!

She studied his clean-cut profile carefully, as if searching for a secret. She thought that if one strange woman had found chivalry wanting in that country, she herself had not!

Dick Hilton had told her of the encounter Beck had had with Webb—told it jeeringly, as he attempted to impress her with the distasteful phases of her environment. He had failed in that. He had impressed her only with the fact that Tom Beck had gone out of his way, had taken a chance, to protect her standing. Others of her men had heard her insulted, men from other ranches had been there, but of them all Beck had been her champion.

She had believed, before she came into those hills, that she knew men of all sorts, but now she had found something new. Here was a man who, in her presence, would plot to humiliate her, and yet, when she could not see or hear, his loyalty and his belief in her were outstanding.

And what was it, she asked herself, that made her pulse leap and her throat tighten? It was not wholly gratitude. It was not

merely because he resisted her efforts to win his open regard. Those things were potent influences, surely, but there was something more fundamental about him, a basic quality which she had not before encountered in men. She could not analyze it, but daily she had sensed its growing strength. Now she felt it—felt, but could not identify.

Two-Bits opened the gate for them, and Tom carried her bundles into the house.

At the corral, as Beck unharnessed, the homely cow-puncher said:

"Gosh, Tommy, how'd it seem, ridin' all the way to town an' back with her settin' up beside you?"

"Just about like you was there, Two-Bits, only we didn't swear quite so much."

"I got lots of respect for you, Tommy, but I think you're a damned liar!"

And Beck chuckled to himself, as if the other had perhaps been right.

"Two weeks now since he wrote," Two-Bits sighed. "He shore ought to be comin'. Gosh, Tom, but he's a bright man!"

Again that night Jane Hunter looked from a window after the lights in the bunkhouse had gone out and the place was quiet, to see a tall, silent figure move slowly beneath the cottonwoods, watching the house, pausing at times, as if listening. Then it went back through the shadows more rapidly, as if satisfied that all was well.

Many times she had watched this, but to-night it seemed of greater significance than ever before. He denied her his friendship; he had made Webb his sworn enemy by defending her—she had not told him that part of the tale she heard in Ute Crossing—and yet he disclaimed any great interest in her as a motive. Still, he patrolled her dooryard at night.

She felt a sudden impulse to do something that would *make* him give her that consideration in her presence which he gave before others. His attitude suddenly angered her beyond reason, and she felt her body shaking as tears sprang into her eyes. The great thing which she desired was just there, just out of reach, and the fact exasperated her, grew, became a fever, until, on her knees at the window, hammering the sill with her fists, she cried:

"Tom Beck, you're going to love me!"

IX

Two-Bits was the last into the bunkhouse the following evening. He had ridden



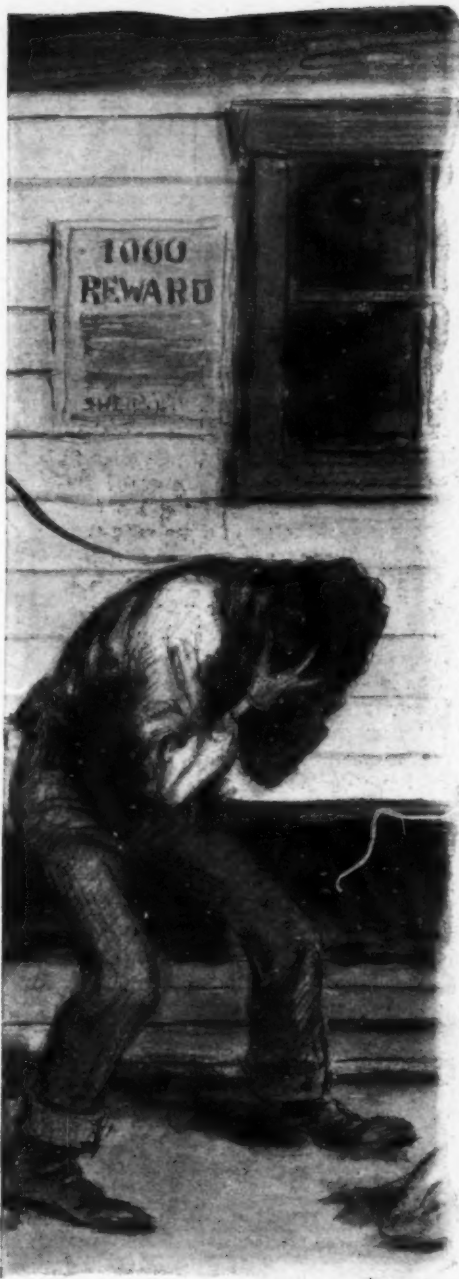
THE MAN'S WORDS WERE FEW, BUT THEY WERE UGLY. THE GIRL WHIRLED HER HORSE AROUND—
HER FACE WAS SUDDENLY WHITE, HER LIPS IN A TIGHT, RED LINE. HER QUIRT—

his black horse in from the westward hills, and had not come through the big gate, so not until he stepped across the threshold were the others aware of his presence.

"Here he is!" said a rider from down

the creek, who was stopping for the night, and the group in the center of the low room broke apart.

"Two-Bits, here's your brother," said Curtis.



—HISSED ANGRILY. "TAKE THAT!" SHE CRIED.
"AND THAT—AND THAT!"

A small man stood beside him. He wore a green, battered derby hat, the band and binding of which were sadly frayed. He wore spectacles, steel-rimmed, over searching gray eyes. He was unshaven. A cel-

luloid collar, buttoned behind, made an overly large cylinder for his wrinkled neck. He wore a frock coat, also green with age, the pockets of which bulged and sagged, and their torn corners spoke of long overloading. His overalls, patched and newly washed, were tucked into boots with run-down heels. In his hand he held a fountain pen.

At the entrance of Two-Bits all talk had ceased; at Curtis's introduction, Two-Bits stopped. He swallowed, setting his Adam's apple in sharp vibration. He took off his hat. He flushed, and his mild eyes wavered. Then he advanced across the room, extending a limp hand, and said in a thin, embarrassed voice:

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Beal."

Tom Beck bit his lips, but one or two of the others laughed outright. They ceased, however, when Azariah Beal, in a voice that was tremendously deep and impressive for such a small man, said:

"My brother, I extend to you the right hand of fellowship! It is a deed of God that enables me to look once more into your beloved face after these years of separation. Give me your hand, brother. May the blessings of Heaven descend upon and abide with thee."

He shook Two-Bits's paw, looking up earnestly into his face, while the blushing became more furious.

"Marvelous are the ways of Providence!" he boomed. "Let us give thanks." He doffed his hat, and, still clinging to Two-Bits's hand, lowered his head. "Almighty Father, whose blessings are diverse and manifold, we, brothers of the flesh, give our thanks to Thee for bringing about this reunion on earth. We realize, O Lord, that these mundane moments are but brief forerunners of greater joys that are to come, that they are but passing pleasures, but joy here below is a rare thing, and from this vale of tears and sin we lift our hearts and our voices in thanks that such blessings have been visited upon us by Thy divine magnanimity!"

He lifted his head, and a suggestion of honest tears showed behind his misted spectacles.

"And now, brother"—in a brusque, businesslike manner—"you, too, I know, will be interested in this article which I was about to demonstrate to the congregation assembled here."

He replaced his hat, held the pen aloft

in gesture, drew a pad of paper from one of his sagging pockets, and continued:

"Made of india-rubber, combined in a secret process with Belgian talc and Swedish water-proof shellac, this pen will withstand the acid action of the strongest inks. It is self-filling, durable, compact, artistic in design. The clip prevents its falling from the pocket and consequent loss. The point is of the finest, specially selected, eighteen-carat California gold. It was designed by that peerless inventor, Thomas Edison. It's every feature, from the safety shank to the velvet tip, is covered by patents granted by the authority of this great republic. It does not leak!"—shaking it vigorously. "It does not fail to flow. It does not scratch or prick. Follow me closely, men."

With facility he guided the point across the paper in great flourishes, etching a crudely designed bird on the wing.

"See? See what can be done with this invention? How can any mature man or woman do without this article? *Such an article!* This, men, is a three-dollar commodity, but for the purpose of advertising I am permitted by the firm to charge you—two fifty? No! Two dollars? No! One fifty? No! For the sum of one dollar, American money, 'E Pluribus Unum' and 'In God We Trust,' I will place this invaluable article in your possession. One dollar, men! *One dollar!* But wait. Further"—diving into another pocket—"we will give away, absolutely free of charge to every purchaser, one of these celebrated key-rings and chains, made of a new conglomerate called white metal, guaranteed not to rust, tarnish, or break except under excessive strain. Keeps your keys safe and always handy. Free, with each and every individual purchase! Still more"—making another dive into the inexhaustible pockets—"another article used by every gentleman and lady. A hand mirror, a magnifying hand mirror. Carry it in your pocket, have it always handy for the thousand and one uses to which it may be put. Think! This magnificent fountain pen, this key-ring and chain, this pocket mirror, a collection which regularly would retail for from four to five dollars, are yours for one dollar. Now, who's first?"

Two-Bits, who had watched and listened with a growing amazement, mouth open, Adam's apple jumping, was roused.

"I am, Mr. Beal," he said eagerly, digging in a pocket for the money.

"Ah, brother, part of being a Beal is knowing a bargain! Who else, now?"

He sold six of the pens before the big bell at the ranch-house summoned the men to supper; then he slipped his stock back in the pockets of that clerical-looking garment, and, grasping Two-Bits by the arm, beaming up into his face, stumped along by his side.

At the table he ate and talked, at one and the same time, doing both with astonishing ease. No matter how great the excess of food in his mouth, he was still able to articulate, and no matter how rapidly he talked, he could always thrust more nourishment between his lips.

"Oh, it warms the heart of a seeker after strays from the herds of the Master to look upon the bright, honest faces of stalwart men!" he cried, brandishing his fork and helping himself to more sirup with the other hand. "Blessed are the pure in heart, it is written, and I know that when in the presence of such men as you, I am among the blessed of the Father! I can see integrity, devotion to duty, uprightness, and honor in all your faces—or, that is, in *most* of your faces. What a contrast"—heedless of the uproar his qualification of a broad statement caused—"what a contrast to the iniquitous ways of those who dwell in the tents of the wicked. Why, brethren, only last night I stood in the hotel in yonder settlement and watched and listened to the cries of a lost soul, a young man sunk hopelessly in sin. He was stranger in a strange land, but he had not yet felt the heavy hand of a slowly roused God, had not yet become the Prodigal. He had tasted of the wine when it was red, and out of his mouth flowed much evil. I spoke to him, asking if he did not desire to seek redemption in the straight and narrow way which leads to the only righteous life.

"Righteousness, hell!" he shouted at me, his face black with ungodly thoughts. 'That's what I want *less* of—righteousness! That's what's raised hell in me!'

"Oh, it was terrible, brothers! He drank continually, and finally they carried him off to bed, cursing and swearing, cherishing bitterness in his heart, which is against the word of the Almighty. A definite wrong was in his mind, I was led to presume, for he cried again and again:

"'I'll break her if it's the last thing I do! I'll ruin her and bring her back!'

"I tell you, my fellow men, I prayed

ferverently for that lost soul through the night. Something heavy is upon him, something tremendous."

"Likely some of that high-pressure booze," remarked one, at which everybody except the cleric and Two-Bits laughed.

"Goin' to stay long?" Oliver asked.

"Alas, I am not my own master. My feet are guided from up yonder. To tarry with my dear brother is my most devout prayer and wish, but we have no promise of the morrow. I may remain in your midst a day, a month. I cannot tell when the call will come."

Tom Beck had watched with a glimmer in his eye until the newcomer told of the scene in the hotel. It was not difficult for him to identify the sin-beset young man as Hilton, and at that he became less attentive to the garrulous talk of the itinerant preacher-peddler. In fact, he gave no heed at all until, returned to the bunk-house, the exhorter made a point of seeking out Dad Hepburn and talking to him in confidence.

Dad's bed was directly across from Tom's, and he could not help hearing.

"I waited to get you alone," Beal said, dropping his elocutionary manner, "because what others don't know won't hurt 'em. Just before I was leaving town, saddling my mare in the corral, I heard two men talking, and it may interest you. This outfit uses the H. C. brand on horses as well as cattle, don't it?"

"That's right."

"Exactly! One of the men said—they didn't know I was near, understand—'So there's eight more H. C. horses gone West.' And the other one said, 'Yes, they was camped at the mouth of Twenty-Mile this mornin'. It's easy. They had the horses in a box-gulch, with a tree down across the mouth, most natural.'"

"Have you sold any horses lately?"

Hepburn glanced about cautiously. Just before he turned to reply, his eyes met Beck's gaze, cold and hard this time, flinging an unmistakable challenge at him.

"Not a horse," he mumbled. "They're sneaking out of the country with 'em. Tom, come here"—with a jerk of his head. Beck walked over and sat down. "Did you hear what the Rev. Mr. Beal said about the horses?"

"Yes, I ain't surprised. Are you?" His eyes, again amused, bored into Hepburn's face with the query.

"No, not—"

The sharp batter of running hoofs cut him short. The whole assemblage was listening. The rider stopped short at the gate, they heard it creak, and a moment later he came across toward the bunk-house at a high lope. They heard him speak gruffly to the horse, heard the creak of leather as he swung down, and then jingling spurs marked his further progress toward the door.

It was Henry Riley, owner of the Bar Z Ranch, thirty miles down Coyote Creek—a cattleman of the old order, a man not given to haste or excitement. His appearance caught the interest of all, for he was breathing hard, and his eyes blazed.

"Where's Dad?" he inquired.

"Here," replied Hepburn, rising. "What's the matter, Henry?"

"Who's this nester in Devil's Hole?" Riley asked sharply.

"Why, I didn't know there was a nester there."

Dad answered hesitatingly, and Beck scraped one foot on the floor.

"Well, there is. Guess we've all been asleep. He's there, with a girl, and they filed on that water yesterday. That shuts your outfit and mine out of the best range in the country, if he fences, which he will! If they're goin' to dry-farm our steers off the range, we'd better look alive."

"I'll be damned!" muttered Hepburn. "That was one of the next things I was goin' to have her do, file on that there water."

He scratched his head and turned. Beck was waiting for him to face about.

"Now," Tom said, "what are you going to do?"

His eyes flashed angrily, and any who watched could see the challenge.

Silently Hepburn reached for his belt and gun, strapped them on, dug in his blankets for another revolver, and shoved it into his shirt.

"First," he said, "I'm goin' after those horses. *That* ain't too late to be remedied. No, I'll go alone!" as Tom stepped toward his bunk where his gun hung.

Hepburn gave Beck stare for stare, as if defying him to question his motives, and strode out into a fine rain, drawing on his slicker.

X

WHILE the men were eating that night another rider had come to the H. C. He

entered slowly, tied his horse to the fence, and walked down along the cottonwoods toward the house. He stood outside a time, looking through the window at Jane, whose golden head was bowed in the mellow glow of the student-lamp as she worked at her desk. He stepped lightly across the veranda and rapped; at her bidding he entered.

"Dick!" she exclaimed.

"Undoubtedly," he said, with forced attempt at lightness.

"How did you get here? Why come at this time of day?" she asked, rising and walking toward him.

"I rode a horse, and I came because I couldn't stay away from you any longer."

She looked at him with her head tilted a bit to one side, and genuine regret was in her slow smile.

"Oh, Dick, don't look or feel like that! I'm glad to see you, but I wish you'd stop thinking and talking and looking like that. I don't like to have you so dreadfully determined when it's no use. All this way to see me! And did you eat? Of course you didn't!"

"I don't want anything," he protested glumly.

"But you must."

She seized on his need as a welcome distraction from his love-making, which undoubtedly was his purpose. She took his coat and hat, placed cigarettes for him, and went to the kitchen to help Carlotta prepare a quick meal. She served it herself, going to pains to make it attractive, and finally seated herself across the table from Hilton, who made a pretense of eating.

She talked—a bit feverishly perhaps—but compelled him to stick to matters far from personal; and after he had finished his scant meal and lighted a cigarette he leaned back in his chair and smiled easily at her. It was a good smile, open and frank and gentle, but when it died that nasty light came back; as if the smile showed the man whom Jane Hunter had tolerated for long, masking the man whom she now tried to put from her.

"If your enthusiasm were for anything else, I'd like it," he said.

"But it isn't. Why can't you like it as it is?"

He ignored the question.

"Busy, Jane?"

"As the devil on Forty-Second Street."

"And still think it's worth while?"

"The only worth-while thing I've ever

done; more worth while every day. So much worth while that I'm made over, from the heart out, and I've been here less than a month."

"After taking a bottle of your bitters I am now able to support my husband and children," he quoted ironically.

"Laugh if you must"—with a lift of her shoulders—"I mean it."

"You get along with the men, Jane?"

"Very well so far. They're fine, real, honest men. I like them all. There are some things I don't quite understand yet. I haven't made up my mind that my foreman can be trusted, or that he's as honest as he seems to be."

"Your foreman? The fellow who was with you yesterday?"

"No—Dad Hepburn. An older man. He seems to evade me sometimes."

Hilton watched her closely. She was one of the few women he knew who had been able to judge men; he made a mental note of the name she had mentioned.

The talk became desultory, and Dick's eyes clung more closely to Jane's face, their hard, bright light accentuated. It began to rain, and Jane, hearing, looked out.

"Raining! You can't go back to-night. You'll have to stay here. Mr. Hepburn can fix you up with the rest of the men."

He smiled peculiarly at that, for it cut. He made no comment beyond expressing the belief that a wetting, since it was not cold, would do no harm. She knew that he did not mean that, and contrasted his evasion with Beck's quiet candor.

"What's the idea of the locket?" he asked, and Jane looked down at the trinket with which she had been toying. "You never were much addicted to ornaments."

She laughed with an expression which he did not understand.

"Something is in there which is very dear to me," she said. "I don't wear it as an ornament; as a talisman, rather. I'm getting to be quite dependent on it." Her manner was outwardly light, but at bottom was a seriousness which she did not wholly cover.

"Excuse me for intruding on privacies," Dick said bitterly. Then, after a moment: "The picture of some cow-puncher lover, perhaps?"

"No, though that wouldn't be so utterly unreasonable," she replied. "Such things have happened."

"Let's cut this!" he said savagely, break-



"AH, BROTHER, PART OF
BEING A BEAL IS KNOWING
A BARGAIN. WHO ELSE, NOW?"

ing in on her and sitting forward. "Let's quit these absurd banalities. You know why I came here. You know what's in my mind. There's a job before me that gets bigger every day; the least you can do is to help me."

"In what?"

"Tell me what I must do to make you understand that I love you."

He leaned across the table intently. The girl laughed.

"Prove to me first that two and two make six!"

"Meaning?"

"That it can't be done."

"It's the first time you've ever been so certain."

"The first time I've ever expressed the certainty, perhaps. Things happen, Dick. I progress."

"Do you mean such an impossible thing as that there *is* some one else?"

"Another question which you have no right to ask."

"Jane, look at me! Are you wholly insane?"

"No, but as I look back I think I have been a little off, perhaps."

"But you're putting behind you everything that is of you." His color rose with his voice as her tone of quiet confidence maddened him. "You're breaking off the life that is yours by nature and training. You're going blindly ahead into something

you don't know, among people who are not yours!"

He became suddenly tense, as if the passion which he had repressed until that moment swept through him with a mighty urge. His breath slipped out in a long sigh.

"You are repeatedly mistaken, Dick. I have just found my people."

"Your people!" he scoffed.

She nodded.

"'East is East and West is West,' you know, and the two shall never meet. It must be true, and, if so, I have never been of the East. I never felt comfortable there, with the lies and the shams and the hypocrisies that were all about us. Out here, I do. Perhaps that is why you and I—" She shrugged her shoulders again. "You see, Dick, I have cast my lot here. The East is gone, for me; it never can pass for you. I have found my people; they are my people, their gods are my gods. I have a strength, a peace of mind, self-respect, ambitions, and natural, real impulses that I never knew before. I feel that I have come home!"

He laughed dryly, but she went on as if she had not heard.

"You have never understood me; you never can hope to now. There's a gulf between us, Dick, that will never be bridged. I am sorry, in a way. I never can love you, and I hate to see you wasting your time on me. I have thought about you a great deal lately. You are missing all that is fine in life, and because of that I am sorry for you. We used to have one thing in common—the lack of worthy ideals. I have wiped out that lack, and I wish you might; I truly wish that, Dick! And it seems possible to me that you may, just because you are here where realities truly count. There's an incentive in the atmosphere, and I do hope it gets into your blood. What you are doing now is so nonsensical, so foolish. I suppose I am the only thing you have ever wanted that you couldn't get, and that's what stimulates your want. It's not love, Dick."

"How do you know?"

"I have learned things in these weeks," with a wistful smile. "I have learned about men, for one thing. I have found an honesty, an honor, a simple directness, which I have never known before."

He rose and leaned his fists on the table.

"You mean you've found a lover?"

She met his eyes frankly.

"Again I say, you have no right to ask that question. In the second place, I am not yet sure."

His mouth drew down in a leer.

"So, that's it, eh? So you would turn me away for some rough-neck who murders the English language and smells of horses! You'd let a thing like that overwhelm you in a few days when a civilized human has failed after years of trying! I've tried to treat you with respect. I've tried to be gentle and honorable. Now if you don't want that, if you want this he-man sort of wooing, by God you'll get it!"

He kicked his chair back angrily and took a step toward her. A big blue vein which ran down over his forehead stood out in knots.

Jane rose.

"Dick!" she cried, and in the one word was disappointment, anger, appeal, reproach, query.

"Oh, I'm through," he muttered. "I used to think you were a different sort; used to think you were fine and finished. But if you're a woman in the raw, then I'll treat you as such. You've got me, either way; I can't get you out of my mind an hour. I'm through holding myself back. You've driven me mad, and you prove by your own insinuations that the love you want is not the one who will dally with you. You want the primitive, go-get-it kind, the kind that takes and keeps. Well, *mine* can be that kind!"

She backed from him slowly, and he kept on advancing with a menacing assurance, his face contorted with jealousy and hot desire.

"The other day"—stopping a moment—"when I took your hands and felt your body here in this room, I was almost beside myself. You haven't been out of my thoughts an hour since! I tried to kill it with reason and then with drink. I've tried to be patient and wait among the—the cattle in that little town." He continued moving toward her.

"Dick, are you mad?" she challenged, trying to summon her assurance through the fright he had given her. "It's not what you think—it's none of your affair—Dick!"

He grasped her wrists roughly.

"Am I mad?" he repeated, looking down at her, his jaw clenched. "Yes, I'm mad—mad with desire of you—your eyes, your lips, your hair, your very breath drive me

mad, and when I hear you tell me that you've found the flesh that calls to your flesh among these men it drives me wild! I can offer you more than any of them can a thousand times over. Great God, I love you!"

But his snarl was not the snarl of devotion, of affection. It was the lust cry of the destroyer, of him who would possess hungrily, unthinkingly, without sympathy or understanding, even without respect.

He drew her to him roughly, and she struggled, too frightened to cry out, her face white and her lips closed. He imprisoned both her hands in his one, and with the other arm about her body crushed her to him. He lowered his lips toward her face, and she bent backward, crying out feebly; but the touch of her lithe torso, full of pulsing life, tense in the struggle to be free, made his strength greater, swept away his last barrier of caution.

"Dick—stop—" she panted, and managed to free one hand.

She struck him on the mouth, and struck again, blindly. He gave her efforts no notice, but, releasing her hands, crushed her to him with both arms, and she could feel the quick come and go of his breath through her hair as he buried his face in it.

At that she became possessed of fresh strength. She turned and half-slipped, half-fought her way through his clutch, running down the room to the fireplace, where she stood with the davenport between them, breathing irregularly, a hand clenched at her breast.

"You—you beast!" she said in a low, unsteady voice as he came toward her again.

"Yes, beast!" he echoed. "We're all beasts, every one of us who sees and feels, and I've seen you and I've felt you, and the beast is hungry!"

"And you call that love!" She spoke rapidly, breathlessly. "An hour ago, if any one would have said that Dick Hilton, sober, would have displayed this, this *thing* which is his true self, I'd have come to your defense! But now—you—you!"

Her face was flaming, her voice shook with outraged pride.

"Stop!" she cried, drawing herself up, no longer afraid, but commanding and impressive. Hilton hesitated, putting one hand to a chair-back and eying her calculatingly. The vein on his forehead still stood out like an uneven seam.

"For shame!" she cried again. "Shame on you, Dick Hilton, and shame on me for having tolerated, for having believed in you—little as I did! Oh, I loathe it all, you and myself that was, because if it had not been for that other self which tolerated you, which gave you the opening, this insult would never have been. You, who, failing to buy a woman's love, would take it by strength! You would do this, and talk of your desire as love. You, who scoff at men whose respect for women is as real as the lives they lead! You—you beast!"

"Yes, beast!" he repeated again. "Like all these other beasts, these others who are blinding you as you say I have blinded you, who have—"

"Stop!" she demanded again. "There is nothing more to be said—ever. We understand each other now, and there is but one thing left for you to do."

"And that?"

"Go!"

He laughed bitterly and ran a hand over his sleek hair.

"If I go, you go with me," he said evenly.

"Leave this house at once!" the girl commanded.

Instead of obeying, he moved toward her again, menacingly, a disgusting smile on his lips. He passed the end of the davenport, and she, in turn, retreated to the far side.

"When I go, two of—"

"I take it that you heard what was said to you, sir."

At the sound of the intruding voice Hilton wheeled sharply. He faced Tom Beck, who stood in the doorway, framed against the black night, his arms limp and hanging rather awkwardly at his sides, his eyes dangerously luminous; still, playing across them was that half-amused look, as if this were not in reality a very serious matter after all.

For an interval there was no sound except Hilton's breathing—a sort of hoarse gasp. The two men eyed each other, and Jane, supporting her suddenly weakened limbs by a hand on the table, looked from one to the other.

"What the devil are you doing here?" Dick asked heavily.

"Just standin' quiet, waiting to open the gate for you when you ride out."

The Easterner braced his shoulders backward and sniffed.

"And if I don't choose to ride out, what will you do then?"

Beck looked at Jane slowly, and his eyes danced.

"It ain't necessary to talk about things that won't happen. You're going to go."

"Who are you to be so certain?"

"My name's Beck, sir. I'm just workin' here."

"And playing the rôle of a protector?"

"Well, nothing much ever comes up that I don't try to do."

Hilton made as if to speak again, but checked himself, walked down the room in long strides, seized his coat, thrust his arms into the sleeves viciously, and stood buttoning the garment. Beck looked away into the night as if nothing within interested him, while Jane stood clutching the locket at her throat, caressing it with her slim, nervous fingers.

"Under the circumstances, making my farewells must be to the point," Hilton said. He spoke sharply, belligerently. "I have just this to say—I am not through."

"Oh, go!" moaned Jane, dropping into a chair and covering her face with her hands.

She heard the men leave the veranda, heard a gruff, low word from Hilton, and knew that he went on alone. After the outer gate had closed she heard Tom walk slowly up the path toward the bunk-house. He had left her without comment, without any attempt at an expression of concern or sympathy. She knew it was no oversight, but only a delicacy which would not have come from many men she knew.

Her loathing was gone, her anger dead; the near past was a numb memory, and she looked up and about the room as if it were a strange place. There, within those walls, she had experienced a rebirth, she had felt ambition to stand alone come into full being, she had shaken off the fetters with which the past had sought to hamper her.

And now she was free, wholly free. The tentacle that had reached out to draw her back had been cast away. To-night's renunciation had burned the last bridge to that which had been; Dick Hilton, she believed, would never again be an active influence in her life.

She did not know the intensity of a man's jealousy when fate has tricked him of his most valued prize. To-night Hilton was gone, and she was even strong enough to rise above loathing, and to pity him for the

failure he was. Just one fact of him remained. Again she heard his ominous prediction, pronounced on his first visit there: "You cannot stand alone! You will fail! You will come back to me!"

She knew, now, that she would never return to him; but there were other possibilities no less disastrous. Could she meet this new life and conquer it? Could she make a place for herself? Was her faith in herself strong enough to outride the defeat which very possibly confronted her?

She did not know.

Outside the rain drummed, and the cottonwoods, now in full leaf, sighed as the wind bowed their water-weighted branches. She went to the window and looked out, searching the darkness for movement. There was none, but he was not far away, she knew.

Her fingers again sought the locket, and she lifted it quickly, holding it pressed tightly against her mouth.

"It's all there," she breathed, "locked up in a little gold disk!"

XI

IF Dick Hilton had not been bewildered by passion, jealousy, and the rage of thwarted desire, he might have known that his horse was not taking the homeward way; and had the horse not been bred and raised by one of Colonel Hunter's mares he might have carried his rider straight back to Ute Crossing.

But he was a canny little beast, he was cold and drenched, the trip to town was long, and the range on which he had spent his happy colthood was not far off. Horses know riders before riders know horses, so as he went through the gate he slyly tried out this rider, and instead of swinging to the right he bore to the left. He went cautiously through the pitch darkness, one ear cocked backward at first; but when Hilton, collar up, hat down, bowed before the storm, gave no evidence of detecting the horse's plan, the beast picked up his rapid walk and took the trail for the nearer, more satisfactory place, where many times in the past he had stood out such downpours with no great discomfort under the shelter of a spreading cedar.

Direction was the last thing in Dick Hilton's mind. For a long interval his thoughts were incoherent, and the conflicting emotions they provoked were distressing. Being alone, made physically uncomfortable

by the water seeping through his shoulders and breeches, sensing the steady movement of the animal under him, brought some order to his mental chaos, and finally realization began to dawn.

Yes, he had followed his strongest impulses. There could be no question about what he had done, but as for its wisdom—ah, that was another matter. He cursed himself for a fool, at first mentally, then under his breath; and when the horse began mounting a steep incline, clattering over rocks with his unshod hoofs, Hilton halted the animal, looked about in a foolish attempt to make out his whereabouts, and said aloud:

"Off the road. That's twice you've made an ass of yourself to-night!"

There was nothing for him to do but go on and trust to the horse. He knew that this was not the highway, but consoled himself that it might be a short cut to the crossing. Small consolation, and it was dissipated when they commenced a lurching descent with a wall of rock uncomfortably close to his right—so close that at times his knee scrubbed it smartly. He became alarmed, for the horse went cautiously, head low, feeling his way over insecure footing. Once his fore feet slipped, and he stopped short, while loosened stones rolled before them on the trail. Hilton heard one fragment strike far below to his left, then strike again and again, the sounds growing fainter.

He peered down into the gloom, but could see nothing, hear nothing but the hiss of rain. An empty ache came into his viscera as he

imagined the hideous depths that might wait to that side.

After a moment the horse went on, picking his way gingerly along the rough trail.

Somewhere beyond or below Hilton made out a light. It was a feeble glow, and its location became a weird



"YES, I'M MAD—
MAD WITH DESIRE
OF YOU—YOUR
EYES, YOUR LIPS,
YOUR HAIR, YOUR
VERY BREATH
DRIVE ME MAD!"

thing for lack of perspective, but it cheered him. The night was unusually warm for the mountains, but he was decidedly uncomfortable, and his state of mind added to the physical need of warmth and shelter, so he urged the horse on.

Finally they reached a flat, and he felt wet brush slapping at his legs as the horse, intent on the light, trotted forward.

Their destination was a cabin. The glow finally resolved itself into cracks of light showing between logs and through a tarpaulin which hung across the doorway.

Dick shouted. Movement inside; the curtain was drawn back, and he rode blinking into the light, which he could see came from a fireplace. A woman stood outlined against the flare.

"Who's there?" she asked sharply, and Dick stopped his horse.

"My name is Hilton," he said, "but that won't do you much good. I'm a stranger, and I'm off my way, I guess."

The other did not reply as he dismounted and walked toward her.

"Without a slicker, too," she said. "You'd better come in."

The first thing he saw inside was a cartridge-belt, swinging from a nail. A rifle leaned against the door-casing handily.

The girl who had held the curtain back for him to enter let it drop and turned to face him. Hilton drew his breath sharply. Blue-black hair, in a heavy, orderly mass atop a shapely, high-held head, and falling down her straight trim back in one thick plait; brown eyes, ripe red lips, a delicate chin, and a throat of exquisite proportions. His gaze traveled down her figure, the natural grace of which could not be concealed by the shirt and riding-skirt she wore. She was wholly beautiful.

"I've seen you before," he said slowly. "You're the girl that demanded respect and got it in the Crossing the other day."

She eyed him in silence a moment, evidently unaware of the admiration in his tone.

"I never saw you. I ain't been here long," she said, her expression still defiant, as if he had challenged her. She searched his face and his clothing. "Where was you travelin' to-night?"

"I was going to the Crossing," he said with a short laugh. "My horse brought me here."

Without comment she walked to the fire and threw on another knot. He watched

her movements, the free, rhythmic swing of her walk, the easy grace with which her hands and arms moved, the perfect assurance in even her smallest gesture. His eyes kindled.

"Set," she said, indicating a box by the hearth. "You're soaked. Lucky you struck here, or you'd have made a night of it."

Hilton seated himself, holding his hands toward the fire. He looked about the one room of the cabin. In two corners were beds on the earthen floor. A table made from a packing-box contained dishes. Dutch ovens and a frying-pan were on the hearth. The roof leaked.

The girl sat eying the fire rather sullenly. He watched the play of light over her throat as it threw a velvety sheen on the wind-kissed skin. Her shirt was open at the neck, and he could see the easy rise and fall of her breast as she breathed. He noticed that her fingers were slender, and that her wrists, bronzed by exposure, indicated, with all their delicacy, wiry strength. Another thing—she was clean.

Suddenly the girl looked up.

"Think you'd know me again?" she said brusquely, and rather swaggered as she moved.

"I don't think I shall ever forget you," he replied. "I knew I should not, the first time I saw you. I shall never forget the way you gave that fellow what he deserved. It was great!"

His manner was kindly, showing no resentment at her belligerence, and though her only reply was a sniff, he knew that what he had said pleased her.

"I wouldn't want you to think I'm staring at you," he went on. "A man shouldn't be blamed for looking at you closely."

"How's that?"

"You are very beautiful."

She poked at the fire with a stick.

"I reckon that 'll be enough of that," she said as she walked back toward the door.

The man smiled and followed her with his eyes, which squinted speculatively.

"You'd better unsaddle that horse," she said.

Hilton looked about the room again.

"Are you alone?" he asked.

She whirled and looked at him with temper. Her hand, perhaps unconsciously, was pressed against the wall near that rifle.

"What if I am?" she returned sharply.

"Because, if you are, I shall not unsaddle my horse. I'll have to go on."

When she put her question she had been rigidly expectant, but at his answer she relaxed, and the fierceness that had been about her yielded to a curiosity.

"Go on in the rain? How's that?"—in a voice that was quite different, as if she had encountered something she did not understand.

He looked at her a lengthy interval before replying.

"Because I respect you very much. Do you understand that?"

She moved back to the fireplace, eying him questioningly, and he met that look with an easy smile.

"No, I don't understand that," she said.

"You should. I saw you beat a man the other day because he didn't respect you. No one but that type of man would refuse to respect you. It's wise, perhaps, for you to take down that rifle when strangers come at night; but it isn't always necessary. Some men might stay here with you alone, but I couldn't."

"Well, you ain't afraid of the gun, are you?"

He laughed outright.

"No, it's not that. It's because I'd ride any distance rather than do something that might bring you unhappiness. Don't you see?" He leaned forward, elbows on knees, looking up into her serious face. "Don't you see that if I stayed here with you, alone, and people heard about it, they might not respect you?"

"It's none of their business!"

"Neither was it any business of that man to insult you in town the other day. But he did."

"But it's rainin', and you're cold. I ain't afraid of you."

It was raining, but he was not cold. The fire was close, and another warmth was seeping through his body as he looked earnestly into the face of that daughter of the mountains.

"And you are a young girl who deserves the admiration of every man that walks. If I stayed here with you, you would know it's all right, and so would I, but others might not understand."

She sat down abruptly, leaned back, clasped one knee with her hands, and smiled for the first time. It was a beautiful smile, in contrast to her earlier sullen defiance.

"I like you," she said simply, and Hilton's face grew hot.

"If you like me, my night's ride hasn't gone to waste," he replied, and laughed.

She looked him over again, calculatingly, as closely as she had at first, but with a different interest.

"You're the first man that's ever talked thataway to me. I've been travelin' ever since I can remember, first one place, then another. I've always had to look out for men—an' I've been able to, too, since I got big enough to be bothered. This is the first time any man's talked like you're talkin' to me."

"Bless you," he said very gently, "that's been tough luck. A girl like you doesn't deserve that."

"Don't she? Well, it ain't what you deserve that counts, it's what you've got."

"What's your name?"

"Bobby—Bobby Cole."

"How old are you?"

She shook her head.

"I don't know—just. About twenty. Alf knows; I ain't thought to ask him for quite a while."

"Who's Alf?"

"My father."

"And your mother?"

"I never had none, that I recall. She died early; that was back in Oklahoma, Alf says."

"No brothers or sisters?"

A shake of the head.

"And since then you've been alone with your father?"

She nodded.

"For weeks an' months without talkin' to another soul."

"Have you always lived so far away as that? Always in such remote places that you didn't even see people?"

"Huh! Usually I've seen 'em, 'most every day; but there's a difference between seein' folks and talkin' to 'em."

He was puzzled, and said so.

"Funny!" she repeated after him. "Maybe it's funny, but I can't see it thataway."

"But surely you've made friends? A girl like you couldn't help make friends."

"I've never had a friend in my life but Alf," she answered bitterly.

"Then it must have been because you didn't want to make friends with people."

"Didn't want to!" she echoed almost angrily. "What else does anybody want



"NO MAN COULD DO LESS FOR A GIRL
LIKE YOU." HE BOWED LOW, AND—

but friends, an' things like that? Oh, I wanted to, all right, but folks don't make friends with—with trash like we are. We ain't got enough to have friends, ain't got enough even to have peace."

Hilton studied her face carefully. It was wistful and yet full of virulence.

"They won't even let you have peace?" he asked deliberately, to urge her in further revelation.

"Folks that have things don't want other folks to have 'em. In this country, when poor folks try to get ahead, all they get is trouble."



—WHEN HE LIFTED HIS EYES AGAIN HE SAW THAT HE HAD TOUCHED HER GREATEST DESIRE—HER WISH TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT

"Is that always so?"

"It's always been so with us. Big cattle outfits have drove us out time after time. They're always sayin' Alf steals; they're always makin' us trouble. I hate 'em. I could get along, all right. I can fight, but Alf can't. He's had so much bad luck that

it's took the heart out of him. If it wasn't for me he couldn't get along at all. He's discouraged."

"You must think a lot of your father."

"Think a lot of him? God, yes! He's all I got. He's all I ever had. He's the only one that hasn't chased me out—or

chased after me. We've been on the move ever since I can recollect, stayin' a few months or a year or two, then hittin' the trail again. Move, move, move!"

"How did you happen to come here?" he asked.

She looked at him, and a flicker, as of suspicion, crossed her face.

"Just come," she replied—rather evasively, he thought.

For a time they did not speak. The fire crackled dully. Steam rose in wisps from Hilton's soaked clothing, and a look of cunning crept into his expression. The rain pattered on the roof and dripped through in several places, forming dark spots on the hard floor; the horse stamped in the mud outside.

Her lips were parted—such lips! He told himself that she was more beautiful than he had first thought, and as filled with contrasts as the heavens themselves. Shortly before she had been defiant, ready for trouble, prepared to defend herself with a rifle, if necessary; now she was a child—that, and no more.

"You better stay here for the night," she said rather shyly after a time. "Alf 'll be back some time before mornin'. Nobody 'll know."

He shook his head.

"You and I would know, and after I've told you what I think about it, maybe you wouldn't like me if I did stay. You've said you did like me."

He rose smiling.

"Sure enough goin'?"

"Sure enough going."

"But you're soaked and cold."

"No man could do less for a girl like you."

He bowed playfully low, and when he lifted his eyes to her again they read her simple pleasure. He had touched her greatest desire—the wish to be treated by men with respect.

"I'll just ask you to show me the way."

"You come by the way, I guess. Just start back that trail, and your cayuse 'll take you to the road. But Alf 'll be back. We've never turned anybody out in the rain before."

"Then this is something new. Don't ask me again, please. When you ask a man, it makes it very hard to refuse, and I must for your sake. After I strike the road, then what?"

"Follow right past the H. C. Ranch to town. You know where that is?"

A wave of rage swept through him.

"I ought to!" he said bitterly. "I was sent away from there to-night."

"Sent away? In the rain?"

"In the rain."

"Why did they do that?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Because there are things which some people do not value as highly as you do—generosity, kindliness, hospitality."

He licked his lips almost greedily as he watched her.

"Did she know?"

"Who do you mean?"

"That greenhorn gal."

"Yes, she knew," he answered grimly, and buttoned his coat. He put out his hand, and she took it, rather awed. "Some time I may come back and thank you for what you've wanted to do."

"Oh, you'll come back?"

"Do you want me to?"

"Yes"—eagerly.

"Then it is impossible for me to stay away for long!"

She stood watching as, touching his hat, he rode into the night. She let the curtain drop and returned to the fire, where she stood a moment. Then she sat down, rather weakly, and stretched her slender legs across the hearth. "I'll be damned!" she said, rather reverently.

Hilton did not ride far. His horse stopped and stood with head in the air, nickering softly, and would not go on when his rider spurred him. After a moment Hilton sat still and listened. He heard the steady *plunk-plunk-plunk* of a trotting horse, and soon the swish of brush; then a call, rather low and cautious.

The canvas before the doorway was drawn back.

"You decided to stay?" Then, in surprise: "Who's there?"

One word in answer, and Hilton remembered it:

"Hepburn."

The rider dismounted and entered.

Dick rode on up the trail. When he reached Ute Crossing, his clothing was dried by the early sun. He ate breakfast and crawled into his bed, angered one moment, puzzled the next, and finally thrilled as he dropped asleep with a vision of firelight playing over a deliciously slender throat.

(To be continued in the December number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

Chickens Come Home

BY HERMAN HOWARD MATTESON

Illustrated by George E. Wolfe

MARTIE DEANE, punctuating her remarks with quick dabs of the little feather duster, was expounding her philosophy of life. Sarpedon Tait, his black hair slicked back so tightly that it gave him the appearance of really having a forehead, listened rather indifferently while he walked idly about the dunnage-shop, examining the squat Buddha images, ostrich-eggs, boomerangs, bits of coral, and the shin-bone of a defunct missionary.

"It's best to trust folks," asserted Martie, waving the duster at Mr. Tait's pinch-back coat. "You match cunning with folks, and that makes it kind of a game, so to speak, and then it's half-way all right if you do lose. Trust folks. It brings out the best that's in them. O' course, some folks's best hain't much. Some will cheat now and then. But in the long voyage, as dad used to say, it pays. That wasn't always dad's system, though. It wasn't his system 'till he'd quit the sea and started this shop. Fact! Dad discovered the system too late, after Den, my brother, went away. Den was just fifteen years old, five years older than me. It's a long time ago. Den's been gone fifteen years."

Martie, her lips half parted, stood staring across the shop. The gray-green eyes of Sarpedon Tait went ranging over Martie's head, followed along a shelf packed with a miscellany of knickknacks from the seven seas, and came to rest upon the old-fashioned iron safe standing in a dark corner behind the counter.

"It pays to be good to folks, to trust folks," said Martie softly, "because chickens come home to roost. Every time they do. That's so true I wonder if it ain't in the Bible."

Mr. Tait wasn't sure. He admired the sentiment, agreed with it, but was unaware whether it emanated from the Bible or one of the poets.

Martie's brown eyes kindled. She clapped her hand to the back of her head and withdrew from the strands of her thick brown hair two bodkins, the knobs set with green jade of a fine quality.

"This ain't a chicken," said Martie, holding one of the bodkins up to view, "but it just goes to prove. It's two years ago that a seafaring party they call Bilge, that sailed with my dad years ago, came into the shop here and asks me will I lend him the loan of ten dollars. Sure I loaned it to him. That's two years ago. This morning Bilge comes in. He'd just made it from China way on a tramp that's to load lumber here in Seattle for the South Seas. Bilge comes into the shop laughing loud, like he's carrying a full head of steam. He planks down the ten dollars, and then he gives me these Chiny hair-stickers. They're jade—real jade, real gold. Bilge laughs some more, swears he stole these bodkins off the empress dowager while he was dancing with her in a Shanghai bund, and fetched 'em home to me for a present."

The brown eyes of the little mistress of the dunnage-shop glistened brightly.

"Bilge never stole 'em. He bought 'em—as a present—for me. It ain't the value of 'em that makes me think a lot of 'em, but 'cause they're just some more chickens that's come home."

The street door opened to admit two old men. The first, who walked lame, had an enormous bumpy nose, which, as if it were not sufficiently conspicuous already, was set off, as in parentheses, by two chasmlike wrinkles.

Glaring abstractedly into space, scraping one foot after him, this old fellow made for the corner of the storeroom, seated himself at a small desk, laid hold of a pen as if it were a belying-pin, and began to spatter ink at a tremendous rate. Presently, but

without having uttered a word, he rose and scraped his lame foot after him to the door.

The second old man, as round and cherubic as the former was angular and severe, had the look of one who had just suffered some shocking surprise. His blue eyes stared forth in wonderment, not to say fear. He went behind the counter, peered apprehensively beneath, as if he rather anticipated rousting out a ghost or something, gathered up a serving-tray and some empty dishes, then departed for down the street.

Martie gazed after the two old men with a fond smile.

"Former seafaring parties, both of 'em," she remarked. "Used to sail with my dad. Both all stove up now. No good before the mast. Couldn't get 'em into the tops with a flying-machine; so they work for the dunnage-shop now, or kind of think they do. Bennie—him with the nose—he kind of looks after the marine-intelligence department. We hire hands here for ships that need crews. Gaff—him that's fat and stary—he sweeps, runs errands, or crawls 'em, I should say, and can sing any sailor song ever wrote. Quite a few of his songs I never let him sing to me but once, and then maybe just part of a verse. Yes, Bennie and Gaff sailed with my dad. They're on the pay-roll of the dunnage-shop, and always will be till this old shebang, for the last, half-masts her colors from the mizzentop."

Mr. Tait, now and then fitting the pinch-back coat a bit more snugly by a pull on the lapels, still walked about the floor. His gray-green eyes ranged over the show-cases and shelves, but always their hunting gleam, like the ray of a search-light, shifted back to the old iron safe behind the counter.

II

MARTIE smiled indulgently at Mr. Tait's scrutiny of the place. Eastern tourists, especially from the prairie States, always so stared and wondered when they entered the dunnage-shop. Mr. Tait had said that he was from Kansas City. Kansas City is "East" on the Pacific Coast. Mr. Tait had intimated that he was a personage of wealth and non-employment.

"I suppose," he said, stabbing with his thumb at a show-case filled with full-rigged ships in bottles, sea-shells, Chinese incense-burners, and little leaden bottles of attar of

rose—"I suppose, now and then, buying all this junk off these steamboat folks, you do pick up something with real class to it, worth money?"

Tait's search-light eyes passed over Martie's head and settled on the old iron safe.

"Yes, once in a great while," replied the girl; "but not often."

For just a moment she paused indecisively. Then she turned to the safe, turned the grinding combination, swung open the creaking door. From an inner compartment she brought forth a small bamboo box with a sliding panel top.

Tait's heavy eyelids, strikingly incongruous in a countenance so thin and pale, lowered to hide the exultant gleam in the gray-green eyes.

"I don't show this very often," Martie explained. "There's several reasons, mainly because it ain't for sale—that is, not now it ain't for sale."

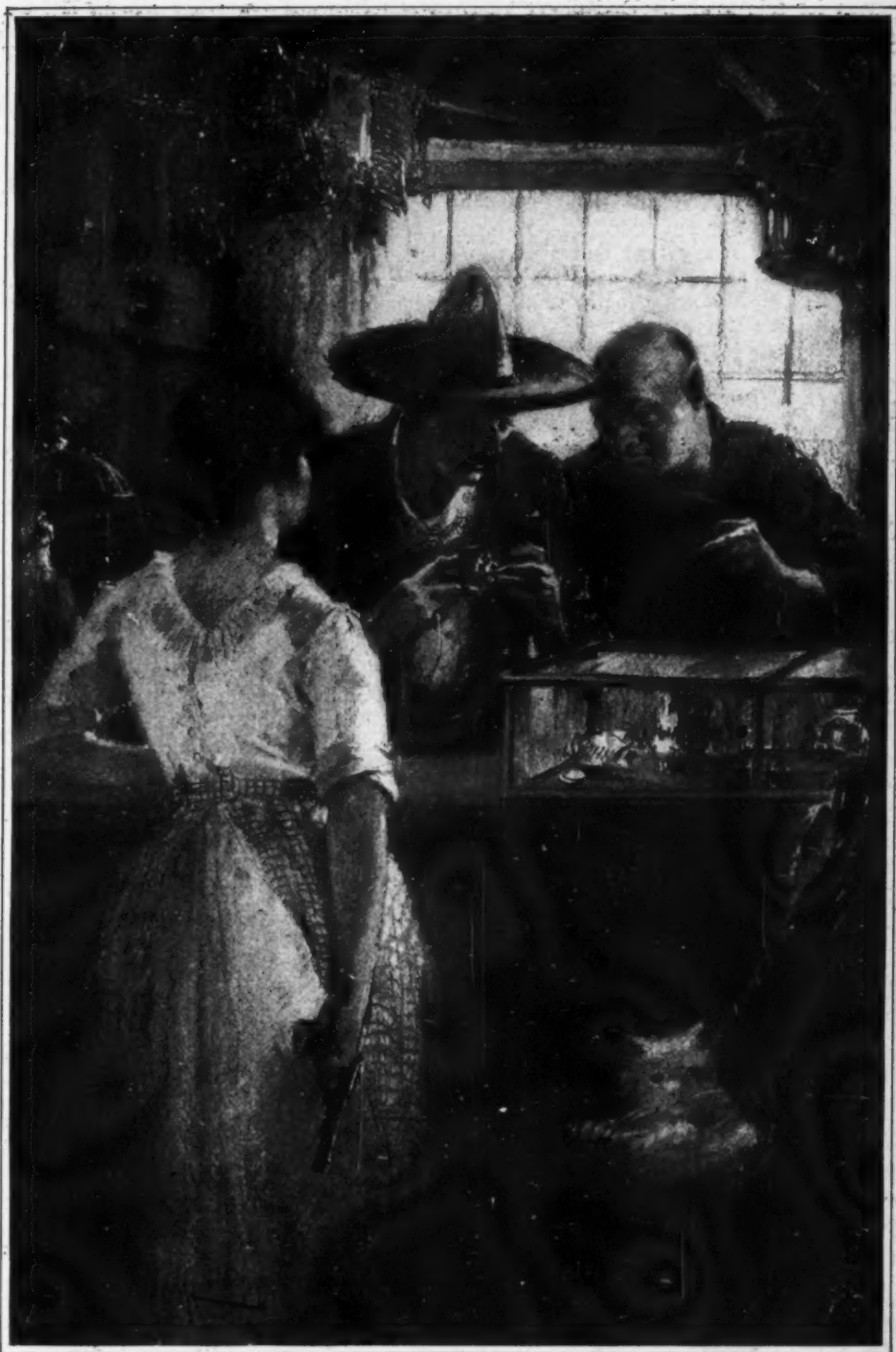
She slid back the panel top of the box, reached within with thumb and forefinger, and lifted a tiny object resting upon a bed of snow-white cotton. She held the thing up and turned it this way and that against the light. In one light it was lifeless and drab; in another, suffused with warmth and rosy color.

It was a pearl, a genuine pearl, but a freak; the artistry of the mysterious depths had formed it into an image of the Virgin, an image almost perfect.

Tait's hand, slender, prehensile, shot forward; but Martie, by accident or design, had dropped the jewel back into the box, had closed the lid. She placed the box in the safe compartment, closed the door, and gave the combination a twist.

"It's a pearl, pure pearl," she said, turning from the safe and leaning her arms upon the edge of the show-case. "It's got sort of a story. A Mexican found it in an oyster-shell near La Paz, in Lower California, thirty years ago. The peons down there, devout Catholics, thought it was a sign from God. The lucky finder traded it for a hundred plain pearls. It was bartered about, stolen, traded some more. Honestly or not, it came into the hands of Pedro Viejo, a sailorman. One voyage, and oae only, Viejo was a bosun on my dad's old clipper.

"Dad quit the sea and started this shop, outfitting sailors at first with the dunnage for their ditty-bags. It's maybe about a year when in comes Viejo. He offers the



"I HANDS THE PEARL OVER WITH ONE HAND, WHILE I SETTLES THE OTHER DOWN ONTO
THE LITTLE OLD SIEGE-GUN HERE"

Virgin for sale to dad. Dad didn't know what it was worth. Nobody did. There was no forty-story buildings in Seattle in them days. Anyway, dad gives Viejo fifty dollars for it. A year or so later in comes Viejo again, half drunk and ugly, and says dad's robbed him. Dad gives him another hundred, then fifty. Every few months back comes Viejo, turns the steam into his siren, and screams how dad done him up on the pearl. Every time dad gives him some more money. Even after dad finds out the pearl is worth two thousand dollars, and tabs up and sees he's already paid Viejo that much, he gives him an extra fifty; and I've paid him a hundred on top of that since dad died. But there's a limit. Two weeks ago in warps Viejo, and starts his trumpet. 'Not a sou more,' I says, 'and nary a ducatoon!'

Martie turned and gave the combination-knob of the old safe an absent-minded twist.

"Viejo had been paid—in full. Besides, I didn't like the expression of his bullet head. He looked ugly and talked uglier. About two years ago he gives me a real scare. In he comes, and there's a Chinaman with him that don't look no more human than a breakfast mackerel."

"Viejo asks to see the pearl. I hands it over with one hand, while I settles the other down onto the little old siege-gun here under the counter that was my dad's."

"Faw! That pearl felt actually greasy after that Chink had handled it. I washes it off in clean water, dries it on a soft cloth, lays it in its nest; and I've never let the pearl go into another human hand since, or a Chinaman's, either. It's just as well."

The story of the pearl Madonna seemed to be of no great interest to Mr. Sarpedon Tait. He stood leaning against the show-case during the course of the narrative, staring down at the shin-bone of the defunct missionary where it lay in impious juxtaposition beside a heathen merman. For some moments after Martie had done, he continued to stare. Then all at once he roused, directed a fleeting, predacious glance at the iron safe, looked into the show-case and said he wished to buy "that."

That proved to be the merman, a hideous little manikin with yellow, needle-like teeth protruding from the mummified jaws.

"That's genuine," said Martie, laugh-

ing, "that merman is. I bought it off a Lascar sailor who won it playing toss with the Chinaman that made it."

Mr. Tait paid over the price, pocketed his purchase, and turned toward the door.

"Come again," said Martie cordially. "You don't have to buy anything. Come in and visit like whenever you want to. Good-by."

She gave him a bright little nod, then made herself very busy rearranging some of the wares in the show-case. As the door opened and Mr. Tait passed into the street, Martie looked after him and gently sighed. He was a fine figure of a young fellow, she thought. She liked him. She hoped he would come again. He was so different from the tough-handed, loud-voiced sailor folk. She hoped that he would come again and she sort of felt that he would.

III

SARPEDON TAIT, purposeful direction in his swift walk, made down the water-front. Where the row of warehouses ceased, and the high masts of the full-riggers and the funnels of the liners gave way to a berthing of lesser craft—halibuters, purse-seiners, gill-netters—Tait turned toward the water and climbed down a ladder leading to a platform built below the wharf planks, and just above high-tide mark. Here was a tiny cubby of a shack, built from odds and ends of driftwood, its floor occasionally awash in the slap of turbid seas.

Seated beside a table which had been fashioned from a packing-box were two men—one dark and sinister, the other a Chinese with a face like a joss. The dark man, slender, almost delicate in stature, had a surprisingly deep, rumbling voice. When he spoke, frequently interrupted by the excited shrillings of the Chinaman, it was like the tuning up of a double-bass and a piccolo, both rather indifferently played.

Ye Jin sat in a corner upon an upturned China rice-wine vat. His little beady eyes, glittering wickedly, gave him something the appearance of a cornered rat. A cornered rat will fight.

Sarpedon Tait stood coldly surveying the disputants. Mr. Tait gave a pull at the lapels of the pinch-back coat, hauled out a box, and seated himself.

"What's the jam?" he demanded.

The dark man aimed a finger, pistol fashion, at the Chinese.

"But for Ye bungling," said the swart person accusingly, "we'd made it big in Mexico."

"All time too many lie," squeaked the Oriental. "He clack um plurl. Ye Jin no clack um."

"Say," said Mr. Tait fretfully, "what's the dif now who cracked the pearl? No wonder you two birds zammed the job. They hain't no class to you. What you birds needed was a manager with a bean."

Mr. Tait drummed his knee with impatient fingers.

"You birds started out like you was half-way smart. Then you falls down and zams it. You two goes into the dunnage-shop and you gets a look at the pearl. In fact, you gets to handle it for a second, long enough for Ye Jin to take a little wax impression of it. That wasn't half-bad work for a couple of jazbos. Then Ye sends some little lead castings made from the wax mold back to China, where they do all kinds of phonying very neat, and them relatives of Ye's takes and sticks them lead images into oyster-shells, where the oysters takes and coats 'em over very neat with a thin shell of pearl. Very good so far, for a couple of jazbos. Then, quite a while after, when them oysters have done their work, you two jazbos beat it for. Lower California with a dozen of them phony Virgins, down into the country where the original Virgin pearl was found and sold for big money.

"Then you two zams the job. You take and pretend you find a Virgin pearl and you sell it to a peon, and the pearl coating comes off'n the Virgin, and that peon, mad like a tiger, he comes at Viejo and lams a cheese-knife into him. You two have to beat it out of Mexico, all because your work didn't have no class, and because you needed a manager with a bean. Now you got one. But lay off'n that jangling, or you won't have. I won't stand for it—get that?"

Messrs. Viejo and Jin, at this stern rebuff, both looked very humble and contrite. Ye Jin reached to the rafter above his head, took down a brass pipe with a small bowl, filled the bowl with a fifty-fifty mixture of fine tobacco and smoking opium. Jin took three soul-satisfying puffs, laid down the pipe, and bestowed upon Viejo a look both amiable and brotherly.

"I was just saying," explained Viejo,

endeavoring to pianissimo the bassoon voice—"I was just saying, before me and Ye got to wording it, that it's easy to get the original pearl. Why, that time Ye here made the wax cast, I come within one of jumping out with it, and making a run for it. I—"

"So!" interrupted Tait. "So! Say, Viejo, if you had, you and Ye wouldn't 'a' had to hunt up no lead for your molds. No! All you'd had to do was just go to a doctor."

Viejo stared incomprehensively.

"Well," he argued, "we just got to have that original pearl to work this new game. I've thought it out, and here's how we'll get it. Just before noon the girl is alone in the shop, the two old bilge-washes being gone. All we got to do is slip in, fetch the girl a crack over the head, kick in that tin canister of a safe, grab the pearl, and warp out. We might wear masks. Anyway, if the girl did know me, I'll be laying low for a long time here in the shack, playing the stove-up, sick sailor."

Mr. Tait began to wag his head with a slow, mechanical-doll motion.

"That's the bright idea! Very neat—not! That little jane keeps the old Pete locked, the combination turned. And you must think that Pete is a cigarette-box or something. I'm about half smart, Viejo, and in a professional way I've saw them old-line Pete boxes before. This Pete is a three-layer with 'bestos lining. You'd kick it in just like you'd kick the corner-stone out from under the Smith Building. Anyway, what you birds got a manager for? Why'd you send for me? Who's to do the planning, I or you, Viejo?"

Ye Jin began to sputter, but Tait silenced him with a haughty wave.

The Chinese, who had become acquainted with Tait in a certain alley resort where Pen Yen smoking opium might be had, was inclined to resume the quarrel with Viejo. Jin proceeded to enumerate Mr. Tait's qualifications. Mr. Tait had shortly arrived from Jefferson City, Missouri. Mr. Tait was known to the profession, and to not a few police, as a dip of distinction, a pickpocket of parts and perspicuity, the man with the vacuum-cleaner touch and the hollow arm. Mr. Tait had listened to the story of the Virgin pearl, had instantly evolved a working plan, and by Ye Jin had been led to the water-front shack for further conference.

At that first epochal meeting, as Ye reminded Viejo with some acerbity, Mr. Tait had outlined a campaign in the rough. They would get possession of the original pearl image. Ye Jin still had in his keeping half a dozen of the replicas of the original pearl, these latter being the collaborated work of members of the Jin family and of certain selected pearl-oysters of Hoochou.

Mr. Tait, having what was known as a "front," would mingle with promising tourist guests in Seattle's better hotels. Mr. Tait would spot a live one, lead the conversation to a

there had been in the little box the original Virgin pearl of great price, there would remain naught but the miserable phony fabrication of the Jins and the oysters of Hoochou.

Aye, that was a plan—simple, perfect. All that was required was the original



"WHO'S TO DO THE
PLANNING, I OR YOU,
VIEJO?"

sympathetic reference to a deep-sea sailor stricken unto death, lingering on to a miserable end in a water-front hovel. The deep-sea sailor possessed a pearl, a marvelous pearl, an image of the Virgin Mary, dragged from the depths of the bay at La Paz, Mexico.

The tourist, in company with Mr. Tait, would visit the stricken mariner. The tourist would fondle and examine the pearl. With the pearl in his personal grasp, the tourist would visit a jeweler to have the gem appraised. The sale consummated, Mr. Tait would settle his lily hand, light as the touch of an angel's lips, and where

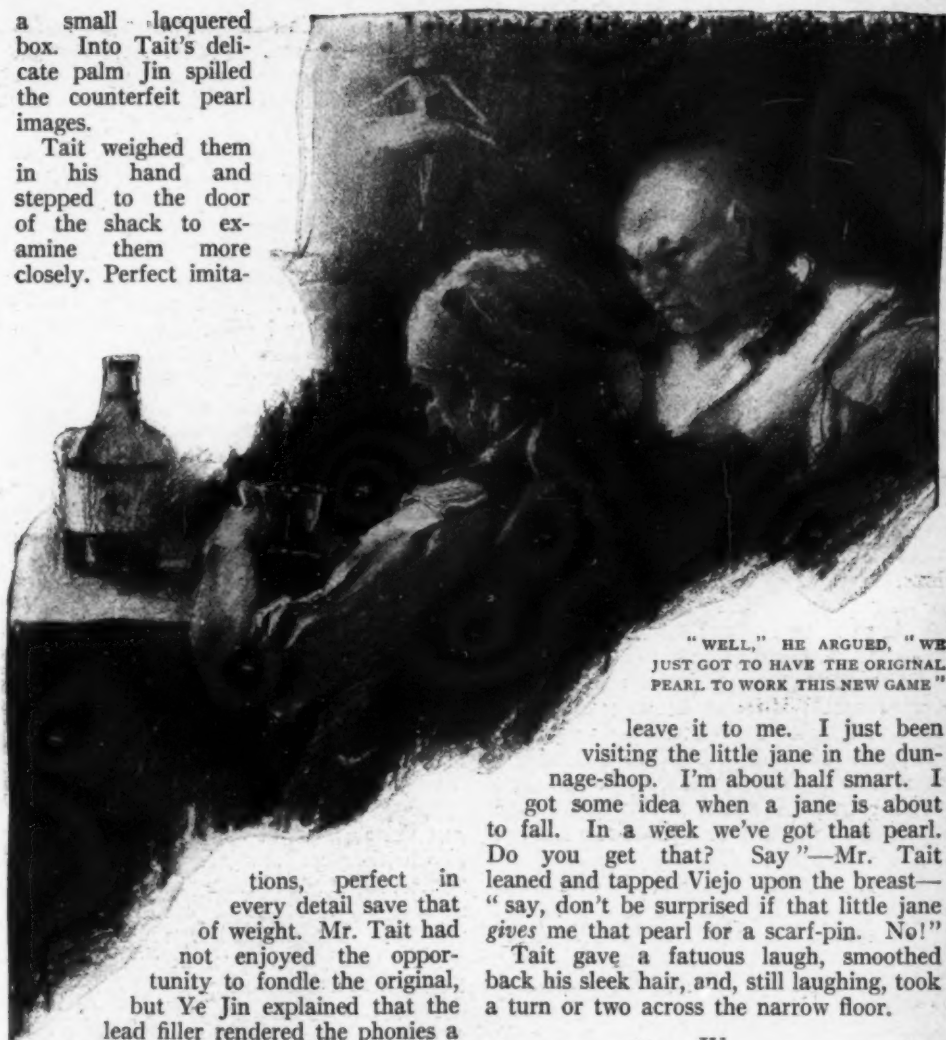
jewel nestling in the old iron Pete in the dunnage-shop.

"Mace that little jane over the bean—I guess not!" the light-fingered gentleman observed. "Viejo, from now you be a little more audience and a little less orator—get that? I'm the manager. Leave me see them phonies, Ye Jin."

Ye Jin thrust a yellow claw into the baggy front of his shirt and brought forth

a small lacquered box. Into Tait's delicate palm Jin spilled the counterfeit pearl images.

Tait weighed them in his hand and stepped to the door of the shack to examine them more closely. Perfect imita-



"WELL," HE ARGUED, "WE JUST GOT TO HAVE THE ORIGINAL PEARL TO WORK THIS NEW GAME"

tions, perfect in every detail save that of weight. Mr. Tait had not enjoyed the opportunity to fondle the original, but Ye Jin explained that the lead filler rendered the phonies a trifle heavier than the original.

"Them's swell work," declared Mr. Tait authoritatively. "If we don't jip a tourist or so— Now all we need is the original, and we're going to have it. And we ain't going to mace no jane over the bean with a sap, either!"

Viejo and Ye Jin looked up expectantly. What would be the cunning plan of the gentleman from Jefferson City?

Tait gave a pull at the lapels of the pinch-back coat and turned slowly about, as if he were a model exhibiting something for young men and men who would be young.

"We gotta have that pearl. All right! Take a slant at me, you birds. You birds

leave it to me. I just been visiting the little jane in the dunnage-shop. I'm about half smart. I got some idea when a jane is about to fall. In a week we've got that pearl. Do you get that? Say"—Mr. Tait leaned and tapped Viejo upon the breast—"say, don't be surprised if that little jane gives me that pearl for a scarf-pin. No!"

Tait gave a fatuous laugh, smoothed back his sleek hair, and, still laughing, took a turn or two across the narrow floor.

IV

WITH studied discretion, Sarpedon Tait began making love to the little mistress of the dunnage-shop. Not by storm did he attempt to carry the citadel of her affections, but rather, like *Othello*, by the telling of fantastic lies. Born to great wealth, his life, he intimated, had been an idle one, almost a vicious one. The idle rich of his set, one and all, were a sad lot of dogs. Sarpedon Tait lowered his gaze and lowered his voice, as if softening the sound softened the transgression. In a halting whisper he hinted to Martie of that almost entanglement with a beautiful but wicked girl from a Chicago show-house. And he had gamed for high stakes. Money meant

nothing, whether lost or won; but even so, the very atmosphere of that gambling-hell had left upon his soul its malefic mark. As for drink—all, all the members of his set, men and women, drank—oh, how they drank! His life, thus far, had been worthless, selfish, profligate.

In shame and contrition, Sarpedon Tait hung his head. Then he leaned across the counter toward Martie. For an instant that lily hand of his held the honest hand of Martie Deane.

What he needed, to save himself from himself, was the interest, the—the friendship—of a good girl, a decent girl. There were decent girls, good girls, who were also beautiful girls. He knew of one.

He gave her hand a pat and turned away in sudden confusion.

He meant her! He hadn't said so in so many words, but he meant her.

As if answering a distress call from the dark, Martie's gentle, earnest heart went groping forth to find this boy and bring him in to where it was light and clean. He was worth saving. He needed guidance. He needed mothering, just as old Bennie needed mothering and bossing when the periodic longing for rum stingo was upon him; just as old Gaff needed mothering and restraining authority when, upon occasion, but for her, he would have chanced the very shoes off his feet against the fan-tan game in China Alley.

Sarpedon Tait wanted to do something for old Bennie and old Gaff. He wanted to do something for all such derelicts of the sea. What did Martie think of the idea of a home for sailors, built and maintained by the gift of a benefactor who didn't care to have his identity disclosed? Later, they would consider the details of the plan.

Also, Sarpedon Tait wanted to do something for Martie Deane.

"I wouldn't urge you," he said unctuously. "You've got some reason why you don't want to sell that pearl. I don't want to pry into your secrets; but if you ever do want to sell—I'll buy. The price don't matter."

Martie turned to the old iron safe, fetched forth the bamboo box, and slid back the lid. She tilted the box toward him. There, as if within its shrine, rested the holy image.

"There is a reason," she said softly. "It's on account of my brother Den. I

haven't seen him since he was a boy. He ran away—to sea. Father had accused him of stealing a five-dollar gold piece. After Den had gone dad found the gold piece. It was then that my dad got his idea of trusting folks, of thinking the best of them, till they disproved it themselves. Dad kind of thought—and I do, too—that if we're good as we can be to sailor folks, to all folks that have kind of slipped their anchors, why, somebody is just bound to be good to Den. That pearl is Den's. Isn't she a beauty? She kind of stands to me for Den's chances in life. Some day he'll come back, Den will. When he knows dad found out he was wrong and left him the pearl for remembrance, why, then, can't you see the influence for good it'll have on Den?"

Martie turned, placed the treasure in the old iron safe, swung the door, and turned the combination.

Again came Sarpedon Tait to the dunnage-shop, and still again. He would begin rather vaguely on his plans for a home for sailors, then shift his conversation to the pearl.

Upon two occasions this subterfuge failed: the old iron Pete sat undisturbed in its dark corner. But Mr. Tait, late of Missouri, had a soul of resource.

"I wouldn't urge you," said Tait, "but just remember that if you do ever decide to sell, the pearl is mine. The price don't matter. I've been looking over some pearls at Lamson's. None of 'em have got the wavery shine that this image has."

Mr. Tait jerked his thumb in the direction of the old iron safe.

Martie turned and gave the combination a twist. Returning, she placed the tiny shrine box upon the show-case between them.

Sarpedon Tait leaned toward Martie, looked her straight in the eye, held her glance.

"That's a beautiful thought, Martie," he said softly, "that idea about the pearl standing for your brother's chance in life. It's great!"

Martie Deane gazed into the gray-green eyes. Here was a profligate rich man worth saving. Not all his thoughts were sordid and selfish.

The lily hand of Tait, light as the touch of a falling leaf, hovered for an instant above the box. Then he drew his hand to him, turned away, sighed.



"I'M GOING," EXCLAIMED TAIT. "I'LL BE GONE—DON'T KNOW HOW LONG. STICK TO YOUR SYSTEM, LITTLE GIRL!"

In the pocket of his resplendent waistcoat rested the true pearl Virgin. In the little shrine box, upon the bed of cotton, lay one of the spurious gems fabricated by the cunning Jins of Hoochou.

V

THE girl closed the box and returned it to the safe. Mr. Tait, giving his waistcoat-pocket a surreptitious pat, was turning to go when Martie reached across the counter and laid hold of his sleeve.

"Just a minute," said Martie, laughing, and nodding her head over some design that she was about to work upon the rich man. "Just a minute!"

Old Bennie came in, dragged his foot to his corner, and began to spatter ink. Old Gaff came in, staring apprehensively over one shoulder.

Still Martie Deane clung to the sleeve of the pinch-back coat. With the free hand she was writing something on a slip of paper, which she handed to old Gaff. Gaff thrust the paper into a pocket, gathered up the serving-tray and the empty dishes, and went out. Old Bennie wound up his labors in an inky deluge and likewise departed.

Martie released Tait's sleeve, came out from behind the counter, and stood smiling up at him.

"You're going to eat lunch with me—right here in the dunnage-shop. Won't that be fun?"

The gray-green eyes shifted, and Mr. Tait swallowed hard a time or two.

Old Gaff, returning with the laden tray, all but collided with the postman in the doorway of the shop. Balancing the tray dexterously, waiter fashion, Gaff came in, handed Martie a letter, and placed the tray upon the counter.

Martie gave a glad cry, held out the letter, turned it over, and, womanlike, began spelling out the return address in the upper left-hand corner.

"From Den!" she said, her voice breaking. "From Den! See—'Trans-Pacific Steamship Company, San Francisco.' A mate on a tramp steamer, here a month ago, told me Den was working as purser on an Asiatic liner. I knew I'd hear—some day! Two weeks ago I wrote him, care of this company. Den—my brother Den!"

Martie's brown eyes shone softly; two spots of red burned upon her cheeks. She opened the envelope with trembling hands.

The smile faded. The face paled. The bright eyes went dull.

"The pearl is for sale—now." She folded the letter, returned it to the envelope. "Yes—now the pearl is for sale."

She stepped to the old iron safe.

Tait, his mouth twitching nervously, the gray-green eyes shifting, searching for a way of escape, began to stammer. He would gladly buy, just as he had said. It would require a day or so to get the money. He was a stranger. No one would care to cash a check for an amount so large. In a day or so, though, he would have the money and would buy the pearl.

"But I've got to have the money now," said Martie, fingering the envelope nervously. "Now—right now!"

She stood silent a moment, thrust the letter into the bosom of her dress, picked up her little toque hat from the shelf, and pinned it upon her head. Then she came from behind the counter, looked up at Tait, and laid her hand timidly upon his arm.

"Will you come with me, please? Times like this, oh, how one values a friend—a true friend!"

Tait stared at her wildly. Then he ran his finger around inside his high, tight collar. Martie hooked her hand into the crook of his elbow and led him to the door. Together they made their way across First Avenue and up Second Avenue into the heart of the shopping district. In the doorway of Lamson's jewelry-store, Martie brought him to a pause.

"I've just got to tell some one," she said, staring down at her feet; "and who, if not a friend, a true friend?"

Sarpedon Tait bent his head to catch the shamed, timorous words.

"Den's in trouble. What can you expect—boy, fifteen years old, turned loose in the world? The letter is from the steamship company. There's just a note from Den along with it. It seems—you see—something in the purser's accounts the company can't make out. Got to have fifteen hundred dollars—by wire—to-day. 'For God's sake send it, Martie,' Den says. 'Then I'll come home and be a man.'"

Martie looked up at Tait, but averted her gaze as if the crime were hers.

"You won't tell on me, will you?" she pleaded. "I know you won't!"

She opened the store door and entered. The proprietor came forward. At sight of the little box he exclaimed:

"Going to sell, Miss Deane? My offer is still good. Or is the gentleman here the buyer?"

Lamson reached for the open box that Martie had placed upon the glass, but quicker had been the slender, prehensile, baby-soft hand of Sarpedon Tait.

Tait lifted the box.

"I would buy it," he said haltingly, "but just now—I—you see—"

The box fell back upon the show-case with a soft clatter. Lamson fitted his jeweler's glass to his eye, lifted from its bed of snowy cotton the pearl Virgin.

"She's a beauty, Miss Deane. Will a check do?"

Martie nodded her head—yes. Lamson handed her an oblong piece of paper. Martie tucked her hand in Tait's arm, and together they left the place.

"I'll cash this right away," said Martie, "and wire the fifteen hundred to the steamship company. Then, why—our lunch. It'll be all cold. I'll have Gaff—"

"No, no!" exclaimed Tait fiercely, angrily. "I don't want to eat. I'm going. I'll be gone—don't know how long. Stick to your system, little girl! Stick to your system! Good-by, little girl."

Tait grabbed both her hands, gave them a squeeze that hurt, was around the corner, in among the crowd—was gone.

Is Our Earth Destined to Be Destroyed?

VARIOUS DANGERS THAT MAY AWAIT THIS COMPARATIVELY TINY PLANET ON ITS
UNCHARTED VOYAGE THROUGH INFINITE SPACE

By Charles Nevers Holmes

WILL the world ever be destroyed? Is it to be expected that sooner or later some catastrophe will eliminate our earth from the solar system and the universe? These questions do not mean the possible sweeping away of all existing life, animal and vegetable, from the terrestrial surface, but the total destruction of the earth in the spherical form that we know to-day.

Such destruction, should it ever occur, must necessarily be caused either by internal or by external agencies. In regard to the former, although we have but little precise knowledge concerning the interior of our globe, it does not seem possible that it contains anything threatening it with destruction, unless conditions exist of which we are wholly ignorant. The terrific shock of a violent earthquake or the devastation spread by a great volcanic eruption may suggest dangerous possibilities; but even if the earth has within it an immense core of gases under enormous compression, the te-

nacity of its crust and the action of gravity would prevent it from exploding "like a bombshell," to use the familiar simile.

The sudden breaking through of the oceans upon vast masses of fiery lava, or the creation of explosive substances within the terrestrial interior, would also be dangerous possibilities; but from our present knowledge it does not seem possible that our planet will be destroyed by forces from within. Such inside agencies as earthquakes and eruptions are limited to local death and destruction, and as the ages pass they seem likely to be less and less active.

If our world is ever destroyed, it will be by some outside agency, and there are several such that can be suggested as possible causes of its destruction.

We can hardly imagine that any of the known or unknown laws of the universe will suddenly cease operating, and the earth has got into such a habit of revolving around the sun that we may assume that it will continue to do so indefinitely.

Therefore, there is no apparent danger of its committing suicide by voluntarily leaping into the mighty luminary.

For the same reasons, there seems to be no danger of any other planet falling into the sun—a catastrophe which might disturb the balance of the solar system, and bring about the destruction of our globe by the fiery sun. As for the sun itself, unless some wholly unforeseen accident occurs, this central body will not go out of its way to harm any of its offspring. It is not likely to explode, any more than our earth; and even if it did, the latter might survive. However, in case the sun should be destroyed, it is safe to predict that human life, if not all forms of life, would disappear from the face of our earth.

If our world is ever to be destroyed, the probabilities are that its destruction will come from outside of our own solar system. Accordingly, we shall probably have plenty of time to await such a possible disaster. The destroyer may be either visible or invisible as it approaches us, but in all probability we shall be warned of its coming. Our astronomers are always alert, and their photographic negatives are very sensitive to light-rays, so that anything unusual happening to one of the nearer suns, or to Neptune and Uranus, the outermost planets of our system, would be discovered in time to inform us before any disaster drew near.

The passage of one of the nearer suns through an enormous extent of inflammable gases would be announced by an increase in the light-rays around that sun. It is probable that at least one of our planets—Jupiter—would ignite such a field of gases. Were our world to be surrounded for a considerable time by some intensely burning gas, like oxygen, its crust would be

burned away, and the more plastic parts of its body would presently be consumed. The earth might be utterly destroyed by this means, for it is comparatively a small planet. And the existence of such a gaseous field in the pathway of our world is far from being an impossibility.

Our planet possesses several swift motions, one of them approximating nineteen miles per second and another eleven miles per second. Accordingly, were it to pass through any medium much denser than ether—perhaps a medium possessing a greater density than that of our own atmosphere, or perhaps a vast field of minute or larger particles—the probability is that it would be wholly or partly incinerated. Any one who has beheld the swift incineration of so-called shooting stars as they rush through upper regions of our atmosphere, will readily understand how our own world might be similarly destroyed.

AN UNCHARTED VOYAGE THROUGH SPACE

No one knows what may lie ahead of our little planet ship as she sails so swiftly through the universe, and probably there are conditions of which our modern scientists have not yet dreamed. But we do not need a scientist to inform us of the possible danger of the earth's destruction by collision with some stupendous sun, which would melt our comparatively tiny globe and incorporate it with its own body.

Our sun is more than a million times larger than the earth, and its heat is believed to measure thousands of degrees Fahrenheit; but the universe contains suns a thousand or more times larger than ours. Supposing our minute planet should collide with one of these stupendous bodies!

With our present knowledge of astronomy, we know no reason why such an immense sun should not enter our solar system and completely disrupt and destroy it. Were our world to strike the gigantic, fiery

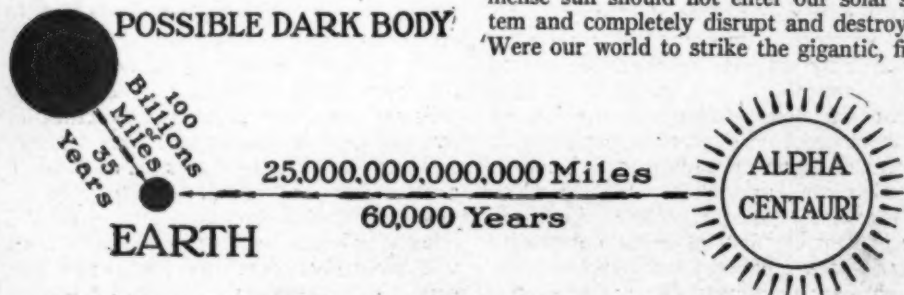


DIAGRAM SHOWING ALPHA CENTAURI, NEAREST OF THE KNOWN STARS, APPROACHING OUR EARTH AT A SPEED OF ABOUT FOURTEEN MILES PER SECOND, AND A POSSIBLE DARK BODY, MUCH NEARER, APPROACHING WITH A VELOCITY OF ABOUT ONE HUNDRED MILES PER SECOND

invader, she would make about as much impression upon him as a small pebble makes when it is thrown into a lake!

If our world is ever destroyed, it will probably be by collision rather than by incineration or other cause; and the possibility of its destruction in this way may not be nearly so remote as some of us believe. Probably there are huge dark bodies in the universe as well as huge fiery bodies; and since we are not able to see the former, one of them may be comparatively near us. However, we shall be warned of its approach long before it strikes the earth. The planetary sentinel of our solar system, Nep-

tune, stationed approximately three billions of miles away, will indicate by the increasing irregularity of its orbit that we are in danger.

There is another dangerous possibility—that the several rapid motions of the earth may create a slight friction with the surrounding ether, so that after countless ages our planet, will be wholly destroyed by attrition. On the whole, it seems reasonable to prophesy that our world will probably be destroyed—not in this generation, or in the next, but *some time*, even though that time may not come until part of an eternity has passed.

The Tentacle

By Clarence Meily

Illustrated by Paul Stahr

SHORTLY after two o'clock on a crisp afternoon in late October the telephone in the reception-room of Messrs. Weismann & Burk rang out its staccato summons. Miss Collins, the office girl, who had been employed less than a week, placed the receiver to her ear and heard a woman's voice ask for Mr. Burk. It was a peculiar voice, unusually deep for a woman—an "oratorical voice," Miss Collins afterward called it.

By mistake, Miss Collins pressed the button that sounded the call-bell in Mr. Weismann's private room, and she heard through the telephone his answering:

"Hello!"

"It's for Mr. Burk, Mr. Weismann. My mistake," Miss Collins said through the telephone, being considerably flustered by her error.

Simultaneously she pressed the button connecting with Mr. Burk's room, which opened from the opposite side of the reception-room. Mr. Burk answered, but Miss Collins, being still nervous from her blunder, continued to listen, to assure herself that the connection was perfect. In this way she overheard the following conversation:

"Mr. Burk?"

"Yes, this is Mr. Burk."

"This is Adelaide, Mr. Burk."

"Oh, yes!"

"I have an investment for you—something extra fine."

"How much does it involve?"

"Fifteen hundred."

"That's a good deal of money."

"You won't say so when you see them. It isn't half price."

"All right. We'll talk over the transaction this evening."

"What time?"

"Eleven o'clock."

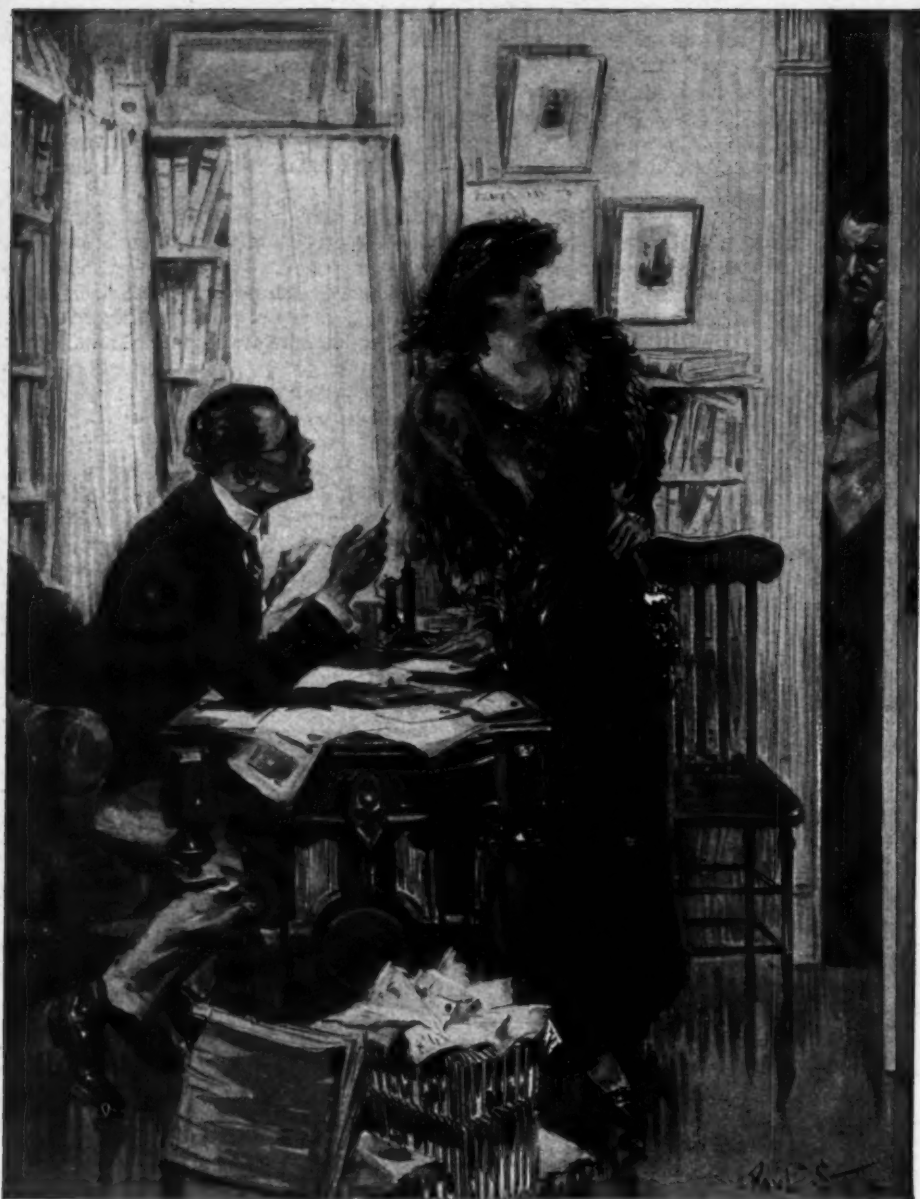
"The usual place?"

"Yes."

"Very well, Mr. Burk, I'll be there on time. Good-by!"

There was the click of a restored receiver, and Miss Collins, blushing violently at the realization that she had been eavesdropping, hung up her own receiver just in time to escape the notice of Mr. Burk, who emerged from his room and passed out into the corridor.

Mr. Burk did not return to the office. As subsequently developed, he visited his bank, where he drew fifteen hundred dollars in cash. He then attended a directors' meeting, which occupied him till five



"I DON'T CARE TO BE QUESTIONED ANY FURTHER. IF MILLER THINKS HE HAS GOT ANYTHING ON ME, LET HIM GO AHEAD"

o'clock. He was believed to have dined at some down-town café, and may have attended a motion-picture show, a form of entertainment of which he was fond. At all events, he was seen to enter the apartment-house where he had a bachelor's suite at about eight o'clock. He must have left

the house later, however, for his bed remained unoccupied. He was not seen again alive.

Some two days later, Mr. Mellus, proprietor of the apartment-house where Mr. Burk resided, called at the office of the chief of police in a state of considerable anxiety.

Mr. Burk's prolonged absence had disturbed him greatly. Never before, in the course of his ten years' residence with Mr. Mellus, had Burk indulged in so extended and unexplained an absence. Always before, if he left town for a day—which rarely happened, his habits being of the most regular sort—he had left a message for his landlord, and usually an address. Mr. Mellus had communicated with his lodger's office and found that he had not been seen there, nor was his whereabouts known. This had added to the caller's uneasiness. He was persuaded that the affair had become one for the police.

Questioned more particularly as to the character and interests of the missing man, Mr. Mellus stated that he had known Mr. Burk for something over ten years. Mr. Burk was a man of middle age, a bachelor, and without relatives, so far as Mr. Mellus knew, or even intimate friends. His principal business was that of diamond-broker, and he was believed to possess considerable means. He had an office with a Mr. Frederick Weismann, a real-estate broker, but, as Mr. Mellus believed, there was no further business connection between them.

Weismann, Mr. Mellus understood, was a German, a chemical engineer by profession, who had lost his position in consequence of war-time prejudices, and had then undertaken a rather unsuccessful venture as a real-estate agent. Mr. Mellus believed that Mr. Burk had occasionally helped Weismann out with money and influence, but he did not think they could be called intimates. He himself was about as intimate an associate as Burk had had.

For a number of years Mr. Burk had been deeply interested in spiritualism, and he had a number of friends among mediums. Mr. Mellus, however, had not joined him in this pursuit, and his knowledge of Mr. Burk's spiritualistic researches was rather vague.

The case took the usual course in police circles, and was assigned for investigation to Detective Raymond, a veteran of the detective force. It was also mentioned at inspection the following morning. At this time, a patrolman, Officer Lewis, recalled that three nights before, while walking his beat in a remote residential district almost in the outskirts of the city, he had noticed a man, who might have answered Burk's description, entering the grounds of an iso-

lated house, located well back from the street in the midst of an extensive lawn, about half a block from where the officer then stood.

The lateness of the hour and the fact that the house had long been vacant roused the curiosity of Officer Lewis. He walked past the place and scrutinized it, and thought he saw indications of a light in some of the lower windows. Supposing that a tenant had at last taken the premises, he went on, and had rounded the next corner when he seemed to hear a muffled scream or cry from the direction of the house. This was followed immediately by the faint sound of running footsteps.

He returned hastily and made an examination of the place, but could find no trace of human presence or occupancy. All doors and windows were securely locked, there was no light anywhere, and there was every appearance of emptiness and even of desolation. Officer Lewis had accordingly dismissed the incident from his mind, and recalled it now only because he had noticed on the lawn a printed sign giving the names of Weismann & Burk as agents for the property.

At Detective Raymond's suggestion, he and Officer Lewis secured a key from Mr. Weismann's office and went to explore the vacant house. It proved to be a modest frame structure of two stories, showing marked evidence of disuse and growing dilapidation. The lawn was ragged. The walks were broken and grown with weeds. The structure was weather-beaten and bare of paint, and had a forlorn and forbidding aspect. The blinds of the lower windows were closely drawn.

They unlocked and entered the front door, and found themselves in a narrow, old-fashioned hall, extending toward the rear of the building. A stairway at the right led to the floors above. Immediately in front of the stairs, and also to the left, doors opened into ground-floor apartments. Notwithstanding the long lack of inhabitants, as shown by the thick dust and musty odors, it was evident that the place was fully furnished.

Detective Raymond tried the door at the right, and admitted himself into what appeared, in the ghostly twilight that filtered through the shaded windows, to be a drawing-room. Easy chairs stood about, and there were a couple of small tables, one of which bore a reading-lamp. To the left

was a fireplace, with a grate containing the embers of a fire. The rear of the room was nearly closed by portières, which curtained the wide entrance to a room beyond.

A few feet in front of these portières, conspicuously and somewhat oddly placed with its back to the opening, stood a large leather chair, and on the floor in front of it, only dimly discernible in the obscurity, was a bulky, huddled, grotesque object. Officer Lewis hastened to raise the shades of a couple of the windows, and the two men stepped forward to examine this distorted shape. Raymond turned it over. It was the body of Burk, dead these three days.

II

It is an axiom of criminal investigation that the more ordinary the motive, the less clue it affords to the perpetrator of a crime. In this case the motive was commonplace enough. Burk's body had been stripped of all money and valuables, the pockets rifled, his expensive jewelry taken; but in the grate the officers found his watch, which was of unique design, and the charred remnants of his pocketbook, evidently discarded by the thief or thieves. It being apparent that a robbery of magnitude had been committed, the case passed under the control of the district attorney, and the corpse was removed to the county hospital for an autopsy to determine the cause of death.

It was a week later that Dr. Ward, the county autopsy surgeon, entered the office of District Attorney Forsyth bearing in his hand a typewritten report of his findings in the Burk *post mortem*. He laid it on the district attorney's desk and sank into a seat with a frankly worried air.

"What did you find?" Forsyth asked.

The surgeon shook his head.

"Nothing," he said.

"He died a natural death, then?"

Dr. Ward leaned forward, pulling nervously at his mustache.

"I wish I knew," he said.

"You mean—"

"I mean there is no discoverable cause of death. He just died. That is all."

"But people don't just die!"

"I know that as well as you do. That's what worries me. If I go on the stand and swear to that, I shall make myself ridiculous; but what can I do?"

"There are no marks of violence?"

"I have been over the body almost with

a microscope. There isn't a scratch or a bruise. There is no such congestion as would show suffocation. The vital organs were perfectly healthy. I even examined them for poison. Nothing doing! I never saw such a case."

"Heart failure?" suggested the district attorney hopefully.

"His heart was the healthiest thing about him. I'm going to say he died of shock. I've got to say something."

"But a full-grown adult, in perfect vigor, couldn't very well be shocked to death. Do you mean you think he saw something? A ghost, perhaps?"

The district attorney was gently satirical.

"You needn't rub it in," said Dr. Ward irritably. "I don't know what to think. If I did, I wouldn't be sitting here drooling in this fashion. I suppose an utter, paralyzing fright might kill a man. Anyway, I'm going to say shock; but I warn you that if I'm cross-examined I shall have to confess the bald truth—that I don't know."

At the same hour that Dr. Ward was making this admission to District Attorney Forsyth, a client entered the office of Mr. Claude Ruggles, a young attorney formerly connected with the city prosecutor, but now developing a successful practise of his own, chiefly of a criminal nature.

The client was a youngish man, with a feline gaze and a sidelong, shifty manner of avoiding obstacles. He had a narrow face in which small eyes played furtively. His mouth wore a habitual smirk, as if he enjoyed a secret joke at the expense of the world at large. On being ushered into the private office, he stood obsequiously by Mr. Ruggles's desk and announced with an animated grin:

"I've got a claim for you, counselor."

Ruggles glanced up in mild astonishment. He was familiar with this type of client, but he had expected a different and more tragic grievance.

"Sit down," he said. "Tell me the trouble."

The client seated himself gingerly on the edge of a chair, holding his hat in his hands. His beady gaze traveled in quick, appraising glances about the room.

"It's like this," he said. "There's a woman that owes me money. She owes me three thousand dollars, I want you to get it. If you collect it, you get half, see?"

"Who is the woman?"

"Adelaide."

"Adelaide what?"

"How'd I know? Just Adelaide—Adelaide, the psychic marvel. Tells your name, age, where you come from, where you're going to, enemies, friends, past, and future, without asking a question. Readings one plunk, strictly in advance. Get it?"

"Fully. And how did she come to be owing you three thousand dollars?"

"Well, it's like this," said the client, his voice taking on a plaintive note. "I gives her these here sparklers, and she's to raise me twelve hundred on 'em, being not half what they're worth, see? And now I can't get any satisfaction. She don't give me either diamonds or money. I got my rights same as any man, ain't I?"

"So you want me to sue her?"

"Oh, no, nothing like that, counselor!" exclaimed the client in sudden alarm. "Don't start anything like that. I don't want any court proceedings. She'll come across without that."

"Oh, she will!" said Mr. Ruggles meditatively. "What is your name?"

"You can call me Miller."

"Is Miller your name?"

"It's a good name, ain't it, counselor?" said the client defensively. "A man's got a right to a name, ain't he? You haven't got any criticism on the name, have you?"

"All right. We'll call it Miller. And now, Mr. Miller, where did you get these diamonds?"

Mr. Miller was clearly pained by the crass impropriety of the question.

"What's that got to do with it?" he demanded with heat. "I give her the stones all right, under agreement. She don't deny it, and she's got to account for 'em. You don't need to go into details."

"But suppose Adelaide insists on going into details?"

"Well, now, it's like this," Mr. Miller answered, with a return of his quaint humor. "She ain't going to want any details. You saw in the papers about this fellow Burk being found dead in an empty house out in the southwest part of town, didn't you?"

Mr. Ruggles nodded.

"Well, you just mention Burk to her, counselor—not hinting at nothing, you understand, but just mention him. Like you'd say, 'Too bad about your friend Burk. The bulls ain't questioned you yet, have they?' or something like that. You won't have any trouble after that. She'll come across all right."

"You think she had something to do with Burk's death?"

"I don't think nothing!" protested Mr. Miller with renewed indignation. "I'm just telling you. You do it like I tell you, and you'll get the money. She'll soak her own diamonds to get it, if necessary. And she's got some jewelry, too, believe me! That is, she has so far," he added dreamily.

III

BEFORE addressing a letter to the psychic marvel requesting her to come to his office for an interview, Mr. Ruggles thought it wise to communicate an account of his queer client to Detective Raymond, of the city police force, with whom he had an old and valued friendship. As a result, Mr. Ruggles, though seemingly alone, was not in reality so when Adelaide visited him according to appointment a couple of days later.

She proved to be a large, handsomely garbed woman of forty, with an imposing presence and considerable claims to a certain somnolent beauty.

"You wished to see me, sir?" she asked, and Ruggles noticed the musical, throaty timbre of her deep voice:

"If you please, madam. Will you be seated?"

She sat down and waited, watching the lawyer out of expressionless eyes.

"You are acquainted with a Mr. Miller, madam?"

"I presume I know the person you mean."

"He placed certain diamonds with you for sale."

She did not answer; merely waited.

"He has asked me to recover them."

"I haven't got his diamonds."

"The money, then."

"I haven't either diamonds or money. I have told the little wretch so a dozen times. Those diamonds were stolen goods, if you want to know."

"I assumed so. What I want to ascertain now is whether they have been stolen a second time."

An angry flush rose under the woman's swarthy skin.

"You can spare your insinuations," she snapped. "The diamonds were lost. I don't know where they are."

"How were they lost?"

"I don't care to be questioned any further. If Miller thinks he has got anything on me, let him go ahead."

She rose to depart.

"Raymond!" Ruggles called, and Detective Raymond stood in the doorway.

The woman who called herself Adelaide turned a startled gaze from the detective to the lawyer. Then her lips, full and touched with carmine, curved into a sneer.

"Oh, a plant!" she said. "Well, go on with the show."

"Miss Collins!" Raymond called. "Will you please come here and see if you can identify this woman?"

Miss Collins's excited visage appeared over the detective's shoulder.

"It's her!" she cried. "I'd know that voice out of a thousand!"

"I never saw this young person before in my life," replied Adelaide.

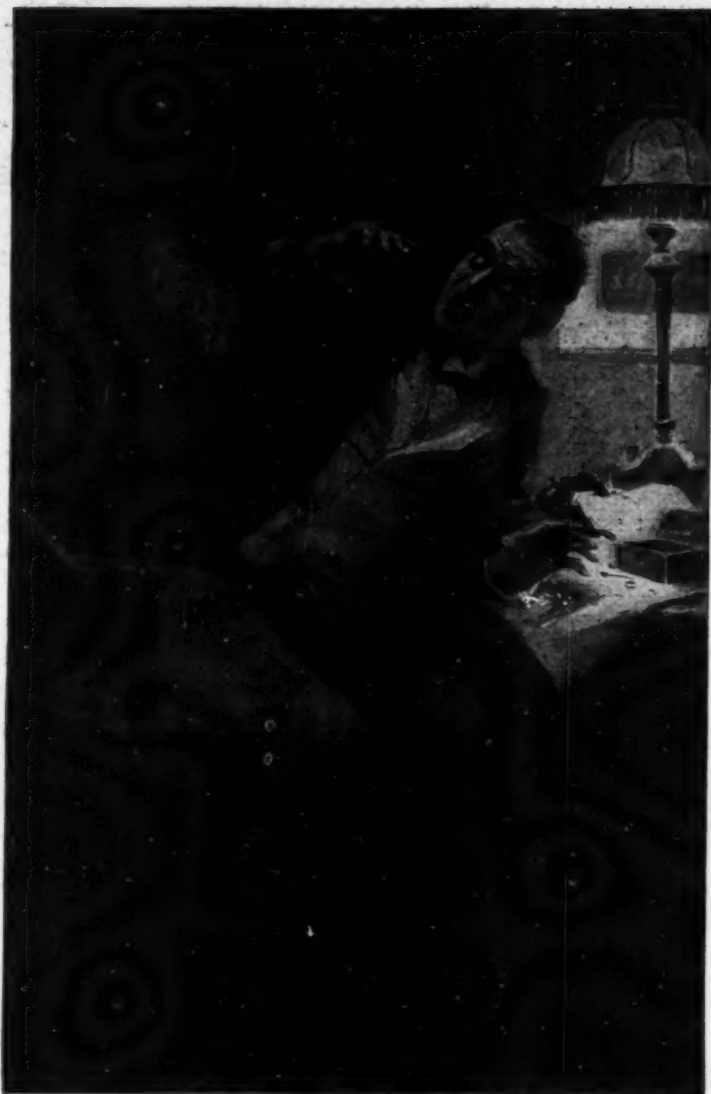
"Let me introduce you," said Ruggles. "This is the late Mr. Burk's stenographer."

The effect of the lawyer's words was startling, almost spectacular. The clairvoyant's composure fell from her like a concealing cloak, leaving her emotions bare. She sank back into her seat with a hopeless gesture. Slowly her frightened, suffused eyes searched the faces in front of her.

"What do you want?" she asked finally.

"The straight, absolute truth from you," Raymond said gravely. "You took these stolen diamonds to sell to Burk, didn't you? Burk was a high-class fence, wasn't he?"

"Yes," she said sullenly.



"SOMETHING CAME OUT FROM BETWEEN THE PORTIÈRES. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS. IT BENT OVER HIS HEAD IN FRONT OF—"

"What were the diamonds? I want a description."

"Three rings, one a solitaire, one a ruby and three diamonds, the other a cluster round an opal; a bracelet of small pearls with a solitaire diamond clasp; a lavalier of diamonds and sapphires in the design of a Greek cross, with a diamond pendant—that's all."

"You made this appointment with Burk, and he kept it. Then what happened?"

The woman suddenly covered her face



—HIS FACE. HE LOOKED UP, KIND OF STARTLED, AND THEN HE JUST SLUMPED DOWN IN HIS CHAIR, ALL LIMP AND DEAD

with her gloved hands. A strangled sob, like the remnant of a half-assuaged terror, came from her.

"I don't know!" she cried. "As Heaven is my witness, I don't know!"

"Tell us what you saw," said Raymond more gently.

She struggled a moment for control of her voice.

"I would have told it that night," she said, "if it hadn't been for the errand I was on, and because I knew nobody would

believe it. I had nothing to do with it. I wouldn't have harmed a hair of his head. I thought a great deal of Mr. Burk — too much, I expect. I have been nearly sick ever since."

"Begin with your arrival at the house," Raymond suggested. "What did you see?"

"I got there just at eleven. The front door was unlocked. I went into the parlor.

"There was a fire in the grate; the blinds were drawn, and lights lit. I thought, of course, that Burk was there and had stepped out for a moment. I sat down, and presently he came in. He seemed surprised to see me.

"What — you here already?" he said. 'How did you get in?'

"The door was unlocked,' I told him.

"He didn't make any answer, though he looked puzzled. Then he said:

"Well, what have you got?'

"I took out the stones and showed them to him. He took them and sat down in a chair facing me—a chair that was standing just in front of the portières. There was a small table near, with a reading-lamp on it that gave a good light. The portières were close drawn. He began to look over the diamonds, taking out a magnifying-glass and looking them over the way experts do. Then something, I don't know—"

She was again in the grip of her feelings, struggling with mingled grief and fear. She

buried her face in her hands, and it was some minutes before she could speak.

"Go on! What did you see?" Raymond demanded.

"Something came out from between the portières. I don't know what it was. It bent over his head, in front of his face. He looked up, kind of startled, and then he just slumped down in his chair, all limp and dead. I saw he was dead. Just in an instant, he was dead. I couldn't move a muscle. Then I got my voice, and screamed, and ran. As I went down the steps I know the lights were turned out and everything was like the grave. I ran for blocks, and then I think I fainted. I don't know yet how I got home."

"And this thing that came out from between the portières—what was it like?"

"I can't describe it. I thought at first it was a snake, but I saw it didn't have any head. It waved and curved around like the tentacle of a devil-fish. It seemed to play in front of his face. The whole thing happened in an instant. I was so frightened I could hardly tell what I saw; and yet I can't get it out of my sight, either."

"What became of the jewels?" Raymond asked after a moment's hesitation.

"He had them in his hands when he fell. They spilled over the carpet. If it was a robbery, as the papers say, I suppose they took them, too."

"Have you made any effort to recover them?"

"Me?" cried the woman. "I should say not!"

"You want this thing cleared up, don't you, and the murderers brought to justice?"

"I'll do anything I can," she declared.

"I think," Raymond said, after a little thought, "you had better advertise for the jewels. You will describe them carefully, and merely state that they are lost. You will offer to pay three thousand dollars in cash for their return, and no questions asked. It's only a chance, but it's worth trying. This is Saturday. An advertisement published in to-morrow morning's papers ought to bring results by Tuesday. You will report any answers you may get at once to me."

"Whatever you say," Adelaide agreed with meekness.

IV

As Raymond had predicted, the advertisement for the lost gems bore fruit the

following Tuesday. On the afternoon of that day the detective entered the office of his young friend Ruggles in a state of poorly concealed excitement.

"I think we're on the track, all right!" he declared. "Look at this! Adelaide brought it in an hour ago."

Ruggles took the envelope which the other held out. It bore the local postmark, and the address had been formed by the familiar expedient of cutting words and letters from a newspaper and pasting them on the envelope. The letter itself, on a piece of ordinary note-paper, had been similarly written. It was without introduction, and read:

If you want your diamonds, bring the three thousand to 429 Larch Street at midnight Tuesday. Come alone. No tricks. Jewels will be there.

Ruggles looked up with a blank stare.

"Why, the incredible nerve!" he exclaimed. "That's the house where Burk's body was found!"

"It does appear pretty raw," admitted the detective. "There is either something back of it that we don't understand, or else it's the work of amateurs who are lacking in criminal resource. Anyway, we'll find out to-night. Want to go along?"

"I couldn't be hired to miss it."

"Very well. Come to headquarters at eight. I'll post a cordon round the premises as soon as it's dark, and you and I will go inside and wait. Adelaide will be on hand at midnight."

The November darkness fell early, under a clouded sky prophetic of snow. A gusty wind came at intervals through the bare boughs and sent tiny swirls of dead leaves chattering along the pavements. There was a penetrating chill in the air, which caused the detective and his companion to shrink within their overcoats as they approached the house on Larch Street. They entered the premises from the rear, coming across some vacant lots from a distant avenue. Trees and bushes here, and behind the Larch Street edifice, afforded them shelter from observation.

The house, as they came near it, looked more ghostly and sinister than mere emptiness and decay seemed to justify. An atmosphere of deadly enigma, of something threatening and insatiate, hung about it, to Ruggles's fancy, and divorced it from whole-

some, human ways. The young lawyer found himself half wishing that he had not come; but the detective plodded ahead stoically, intent on doing a creditable piece of work.

They circled the building warily and entered through the front door, the key to which Raymond had kept. They passed through the hall into the front drawing-room, where Burk had met his end, discovering their way by means of the detective's electric flash-light.

Careful to avoid disturbing anything, Raymond, with his companion following, stepped through the still parted portières into the room beyond. They were then in a living-room, larger and more elaborately furnished than the other, but even more heavily mantled in dust and musty odors. Toward the farther end, a door opened in the direction of the hallway. Opposite was a bay window hung with mildewed curtains. To right and left of this were book-cases, while at the farther end of the room stood a piano. A large library-table and numerous chairs completed the principal furnishings.

Raymond surveyed the ensemble with practised eye.

"Not much chance of concealment here," he said. "We might try the hall and leave that door open a crack."

He advanced and tried the door, which opened at his touch. He stepped back, alarmed.

"A closet!" he exclaimed. "Underneath the stairs. Why, the place is a regular *cul-de-sac*. The only exit is through that front room."

"There is another door behind that piano," Ruggles observed.

"So there is; but we can't disclose our presence by disturbing the furniture."

"How about the bay window?"

"No chance. We would be silhouetted against the glass. The windows go nearly to the floor. We'll have to take the risk of the closet, but I don't like it."

The detective continued to mutter protests as he explored the interior of the closet, which was empty.

"What time is it?" he demanded.

"Nine o'clock," Ruggles answered.

"Three hours yet! Well, we might as well take our places. We don't know when they'll come."

They ensconced themselves in the closet, crouching together in the malodorous dark-

ness. They talked for a time in whispers, then were silent. Time passed in an interminable monotony of hours. After what seemed a century, Raymond roused again and asked:

"What time is it now?"

By the cautious glint of the flash-light Ruggles examined his watch.

"Just five minutes before midnight," he announced.

"Hush!" whispered Raymond, and they held their breaths.

There was a sound which indicated that a key was being fitted into the lock of the front door. A moment later they knew the door had been opened. There was muffled movement in the hall, followed by more distinct footsteps in the front room. They saw the glimmer of a match, and then once more came darkness and silence.

This was presently broken, however, by a renewed stir. Peering through the crack in the closet door over Raymond's shoulder, Ruggles could see a dim shape outlined in the opening of the portières. It moved forward, and the portières were gently drawn together, bringing again the effect of darkness. They could now hear steps and slight shiftings of furniture in the room. Arrangements of some sort seemed to be in progress. Ruggles thought he could detect the crinkling of paper, as of a package being handled or unwrapped.

Suddenly Raymond gripped his wrist with fingers that bit into the flesh. There were steps plainly audible, bold this time and undisguised, along the front porch.

"Adelaide!" breathed the detective noiselessly, and at the same instant every item in the room in front of them burst into theatrical view as the electric lights overhead flared into bewildering brilliance.

V

THE next few moments seemed to Ruggles like an insane nightmare. He knew that Raymond, with a shout of warning that split the night, had hurled open the closet door and was half dragging, half carrying him in a mad leap across the room toward the bay window. He had a second's confused glimpse of a figure standing in front of the portières, with something partly concealed in wrapping-paper in its hands.

The shape turned at Raymond's shout, and Ruggles, even in that delirious instant, experienced a qualm of strange horror at seeing that the face was enveloped in a

black and unnaturally protuberant mask. Then, amid a shower of splintered wood and shattered glass, they crashed through the window and fell upon the cement walk underneath.

Raymond rose, shrieking.

"Adelaide!" he shouted. "Adelaide! Run! Run for your life! Get out of the house! Run!"

As if reason had quite left him, he began in a frenzy to gather broken pieces of the cement under their feet and hurl them through the lower windows of the house.

"Smash every window!" he cried to Ruggles, who began mechanically to imitate him.

Other figures loomed round them in the darkness—the officers whom Raymond had stationed around the place. One of these supported the hysterical and half-fainting figure of the clairvoyant. Having reduced all the windows in the two rooms to gaping holes, Raymond ceased his tempest of destruction and wiped his forehead.

"Stand back!" he ordered. "Stand well back and wait!"

They obeyed him and waited in a stillness that contrasted oddly with the furor of the moment before. The gusty wind, which had swelled to almost a gale, swept through the swaying curtains and torn shades of the demolished windows. Not a sound or trace of movement came from the interior of the rooms, where the garish lights continued to burn.

An eery feeling that they had been attacking something intangible, something ghostly, beset the young attorney. He turned inquiringly to the detective.

"We'll try it now," Raymond said, drawing an automatic from his pocket. "You can go with me, Ruggles, if you are willing to take a chance. The rest of you stay out here and shoot if anybody tries to get out through the windows."

Followed by Ruggles, the detective returned to the front door and entered the house, holding his pistol ready for instant use. The two passed through the front room, and very cautiously Raymond parted the portières and peered between them. Then he stepped boldly forward. On the floor, face downward beneath the streaming lights, lay the lifeless body of a man. Raymond bent and turned the face upward to the light.

"Weismann!" he gasped. "The man Burk officed with!"

Near the hand of the dead may lay the black gas-mask torn from his head, and close by was the devilish engine of murder which, when trapped, he had turned upon himself. It consisted of a small, metallic gas-tank, fitted with a valve and nozzle to which was attached a section of rubber garden-hose, supported by a rod and manipulated by a cord fastened to its farther end.

In the freshened air there still lingered a faint odor suggestive of crushed peach-leaves.

AUTUMN'S PATHWAY

PASSING Autumn with her paint-brush
Dressed the woods in colors bold,
Splashed the sky with deeper sunsets—
Primrose, sapphire, marigold;

Culled the leaves in brilliant windrows,
Shook the ripe nuts from the trees,
Bronzed the squashes and the pumpkins,
Stacked the wheat in golden seas;

Coaxed Jack Frost to kiss pale apples
Into rosy-glowing spheres,
Hung the sunlit, spreading vineyards
Low with grapes like purple tears;

Opened all her treasure-chambers,
And, with gracious hands outflung,
Danced while Winter, piping softly,
Wide her snowy portal swung.

Virginia Stuart

The Odd Measure

A New Form of Roadside Trade

*Farmers and
Fruit-Growers Sell
Their Wares to
Motorists*

IN the old days, thousands of peddlers went along the main roads of the United States, carrying from house to house the manufactures of New England, from clocks and tinware to the fanciest of rugs and gewgaws. The tin-pedler is still an institution in certain districts; store-boaters ply their trade along the Ohio and the Mississippi; from many towns peddlers of meat and groceries circle in ever-widening countryside trading for the day. The once-famous Altoona wagon-traders, who worked down into the foot-hills of the Blue Ridge, gathering chickens in exchange for town-made goods, are disappearing—and so are all the other peddlers, for that matter. The mail-order houses and rural free delivery have taken their place.

Now the towns are going to the country for their supplies, and along many of the famous highways are found tiny trading-stations, where farmers put out in front of the old homestead a table with baskets of berries, trays of apples, bundles of sweet corn, and even dozens of eggs that show how fresh they are. From these few articles on a small sewing-table or mere box, to booths containing a varied assortment, farmers are selling to the automobile tourist vast quantities of things to eat—at city prices. The Lake Road from Buffalo to Toledo, the Lincoln Highway, and other thousands of miles of well-traveled automobile thoroughfares are all marked by the wayside sale-stations, in practical recognition of the purchasing power of the traveling household buyers. Near New York they may be seen here and there in New Jersey and on Long Island, and especially in the fruit-growing district along the west bank of the Hudson, above Newburg.

The amount of trade done is important, speaking commercially. Village and even city stores feel the effects when hundreds of their patrons drive out to the sources of supply, to buy eggs, berries, chickens, maple-sirup, honey, home-made candy, and other delicacies. The market columns of the newspapers set the price of eggs at the wayside, and they jump from sixty to sixty-eight cents a dozen overnight, even as on the greater exchanges. The freshness of the supply and the pleasure of the ride make the price paid for the gasoline transportation well spent.

* * * * *

The Twenty- Eight Informers of Laon

*The Merited
Punishment of
a Gang of Spies
and Traitors*

THE trial in Paris of the twenty-eight "informers of Laon" was somewhat overshadowed by that of Landru, the imitation *Bluebeard* who practised a well-known system in order to acquire the small belongings of his feminine victims. The French are turning greedily now to any sensation that has nothing to do with the war, and the trial of the informers had nothing to do with anything but the war. It was an interesting case, nevertheless.

The collection of twenty-eight opprobrious specimens was made by a German spy, one Thomas, who was sent to Laon for the purpose immediately after the Germans felt securely settled in that town. The confederates he gathered there were a motley crowd—three German residents, a French waiter, a law clerk, some disloyal farmers, and several women of the streets. And then there was Toqué—a former official of the colonial ministry who had "done time," a social outcast—Toqué, which is appropriately, in French slang, the equivalent of our "cracked head."

Their victims will never be fully counted, but the known list of tortures, deportations to slavery, and summary shootings for which these agents of the German spy system are responsible is frightful enough.

Probably they would never have been found out but for a purely accidental encounter. On the day when King Albert of the Belgians was fêted by all Paris, a poilu, who had barely escaped being victimized by the spy Thomas, met the man strolling among the holiday crowds. He told the police, Thomas was arrested, and, running true to form, he forthwith betrayed every one of his associates at Laon.

Of the twenty-eight, Toqué is the most interesting both to criminologists and to psychologists. Of good middle-class stock, a university graduate, he obtained a post in the French colonial judiciary, where he took particular delight in punishing natives by blowing them up with sticks of dynamite. He was charged with official misconduct, and an unaccountably mild sentence to several years at hard labor followed; but when he left prison he was a marked man, shunned by those of his own class. He tried newspaper work and drifted to blackmailing sheets; he tried photography and goodness knows what else—unsuccessful in everything, and an old man before his time. The war gave him the undeserved dignity of a private's uniform. A short leave, and he went to Laon, just before the Germans took it. He remained, met Thomas, and found with him congenial and lucrative employment—while it lasted. But "Marianne"—the symbol of France—put her hand on his shoulder, through a French poilu and a German spy, and now she has made him pay the price of his vileness.

* * * * *

A Mission from the Court of Abyssinia

*The Modern Queen
of Sheba Sends
Richly Clad Envoys
to Washington*

NEVER, perhaps, since the Queen of Sheba personally headed a deputation to call on King Solomon, has a more interesting embassy been sent from the far regions of Ethiopia than the mission that recently came to visit the Great Chief at Washington, bringing greetings from Her Majesty the Empress of Abyssinia, descendant and heiress of Sheba's queen.

The chief envoy, Dadjazmatch Nado, addressed President Wilson in the native Amharic tongue, and the President replied in English, expressing his hope for closer relations between our comparatively youthful republic and a kingdom that was old when the history of the modern world began. Clad in velvet and cloth of gold, and glittering with jewels, the four members of the mission were worthy representatives of their land of barbaric splendor and of their empress, Waizeru Zauditu, daughter of Menelik, the warrior king.

Born in 1876, the empress succeeded her nephew, Dij Yasu, who was deposed in 1916. She was crowned in 1917, and another nephew, Ras Tafari, was proclaimed heir to the throne. The existing Abyssinian state was built up on the ruins of the kingdom of Amhara, after the tyrant Theodore was overthrown by the British in 1868. It reached power and prosperity under Menelik, a prince of Shoa, who assumed full control in 1889. Under him were grouped together Gallas, Somalis, Shoans, and Tigrians, the Shoans being the ruling military class. Christianity had been preached among them in the fourth century by the missionary Frumentius, a disciple of Athanasius, and the Abyssinian church disputes with that of Armenia the right to call itself the oldest national Christian communion in the world.

Aloof from the march of European civilization throughout long centuries, they once more came in touch with it in 1885, when Italy, on the lookout for colonies for her growing population, began the exploitation of the neighboring district of Eritrea. For years the armed strength of Italy was brought to a halt before the stubborn resistance of King Menelik and his able general, Ras Alula; and the decisive Abyssinian victory at Adowa, in 1896, was followed by the peace of Addis Abeba. Later, the integrity of Abyssinia was mutually guaranteed by England, France, and Italy, and Menelik's daughter now holds peaceful and undisputed sway over an empire

including nearly four hundred thousand square miles, the most powerful and important native state in Africa.

* * * * *

Commerce in Abyssinia

*Italian Traders
Control Most of It,
and Its Methods
Are Peculiar*

IN 1905 the late Emperor Menelik of Abyssinia established a bank, which mints coins and issues paper money, the principal coin being the tarari, worth about fifty cents. But as the foreign trade of the country is mainly in the hands of Italians, Italian currency is also in general circulation.

In a certain shop in Florence there may be seen a diploma issued by Menelik—a sort of trader's letters patent, rather curiously combining royal pomposity and primitive simplicity. It shows a portrait of the ruler wearing his imperial straw hat; beside him is his consort, her black hair drawn back severely from her forehead; and near by is the young heir to the throne, recently deposed. Below is inscribed:

We, Menelik II, King of Shoa, by these letters authorize Giuseppe Gualleroti, of Florence, manufacturer of sirups, sweets, and liqueurs, to manufacture these good things for us, and we hereby authorize him to place our royal coat of arms above the door of his workshop. Given at Entotto, April 18, 1886.

Another Italian-Abyssinian trader, known along the Red Sea from Suez to Aden, is Skander (Alexander) Seror, a native of Leghorn, who makes his headquarters at Massowa. He has lived so long among the natives that he has become as one of them. He lives in an unending cloud of cigarette-smoke, and has taken on the dreamy ways of the Orient as a cloak to business. Skins and rubber and pearls are all one to him; he buys what he finds.

Would you know how sales are conducted in Abyssinia? Stretched on a divan, Skander listens to the would-be sellers without impatience, smoking countless cigarettes and drinking coffee, which he passes around to his clients. Then suddenly he gets up, puts on his hat, and goes out, leaving the assembled merchants without a word. They wait patiently for his reappearance, meanwhile smoking his cigarettes and drinking his coffee. He remains away for hours, perhaps, but when he returns they are still there. He utters a single word—either "*Tain*" (yes), or "*Mafisc*" (no), and they understand that the transaction is confirmed or rejected. They retire, bowing, and knowing that it is useless to try to make any other sale that day.

Our American salesmen may find that they have much to learn before they can do business successfully in the realm of the Empress Zauditu.

* * * * *

Two Nationalist Delegations from South Africa

*Dutch and
Negro Missions
Present Their
Political Claims*

WHILE the Dutch-speaking nationalists of South Africa succeeded in sending to the peace conference in Paris—by a long and devious route, though with the consent of the British government—a delegation to advocate independence for South Africa, another body of delegates from the same territory made its way to the Colonial Office in London to advocate the removal of the existing color bar. They called themselves the representatives of the Native Nationalist Congress of South Africa, and included Mr. Thelma, a Basuto, and Mr. Myabaza, a Zulu, both educated and politically intelligent men.

Their demands were that the present political disabilities of the native races should be removed from the Act of Union. The Colonial Office pleaded inability, and referred them to their home government; but the delegates urged that as the color bar was put in the act with the consent of the imperial Parliament, the imperial Parliament should take steps to have it removed.

One of the most galling of the restrictions of what the natives regard as their rights is the Pass Law, which requires them to take out permits to move from place to place, a fee being charged for each permit. The annual

revenue from this source is stated at about fifteen hundred thousand dollars.

It shows no small political acumen that these races should insist on bringing their national issue to the front at a time when national and racial divisions of all kinds are so much in the lime-light, and when world statesmen are busy making the world, if not safe for democracy, at least a land of opportunity for peoples hitherto handicapped. But the problem presented is no easy one, for the twelve or thirteen hundred thousand European inhabitants of South Africa are hopelessly outnumbered by more than four times as many natives, most of whom are in a more or less primitive state of civilization, and who, moreover, are multiplying with great rapidity now that civilized rule has ended the murderous tribal wars that used to keep down their increase. Political equality is manifestly impossible if that great region is to remain a habitation for white men.

* * * * *

Belated Recognition for a Hero of Zeebrugge

*How Commander
Brock Met His
Death on the
Blood-Drenched
Mole*

BY testimony given before a British commission empowered to hear claims growing out of the war, one of the mysteries of the Zeebrugge affair has recently been solved. At the time when Captain Carpenter made his heroic attack on the mole of the chief German base on the Belgian coast, the name of Wing-Commander Brock, of the Royal Naval Air Squadron, was prominent in the newspaper despatches. The question was asked, what was he doing in that *galère*? It was known that he had invented a smoke-screen which was used by the attacking vessels, but this hardly explained his dash ashore with the landing-party and his death beside the German guns.

An official witness, in paying tribute to Commander Brock's services, cleared up the mystery. Brock had come to the conclusion, which Admiral Jellicoe has since publicly confirmed, that the Germans had a range-finder superior to that used by the British Navy. He therefore begged to be allowed to join in the dash ashore at Zeebrugge, because it might give him an opportunity of finding out the nature and construction of the enemy's instrument; and it was on the blood-drenched mole, in the terrific turmoil of the attack, while he was quietly examining the scientific principle of the German device, that he met his death.

This statement was made before the commission during the hearing of a claim on behalf of his widow for compensation for an anti-Zeppelin bullet invented by her husband. The Brock bullet had been instrumental in bringing down three or four German air-ships. It was shown in evidence that it was the only bullet that had succeeded in setting fire to a gas-bag at more than two hundred yards' range, one of the peculiarities of the missile being its extreme sensitiveness, which causes it to burst into flames on piercing, or even touching, the outer fabric of the balloon. The commission agreed to the widow's claim, and awarded her a sum amounting to nearly one hundred thousand dollars.

* * * * *

The Real Armageddon

*Allenby's Army
Actually Fought
There During the
Great War*

NOW that the war is over and the world has come safely through Armageddon, it may be worth while to recall the literal meaning of that dreaded and much-abused word. Many of those who have used it in our public press could not have told its origin, but they seemed to think that it had some sort of association with Satan or Apollyon, and that it suited the appalling horrors of the world war.

Originally we find it in a passage in the Book of Revelation, where the Sixth Angel pours out his vial of wrath on the Euphrates:

And I saw spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirit of devils which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle

of that great day of God Almighty. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

Scholars tell us that Armageddon means the hill of Megiddo, which lies above the plain of Esdraelon, or valley of Jezreel, commanding the approaches to the upper Jordan. When the seer of the Apocalypse chose it to symbolize the battle-field of the kings of the world, he did so because it was the chief strategic gateway to Palestine, and was connected with many of the military events in Jewish history. General Allenby captured it to cut off the Turks in the late war; Napoleon used it in his attempted invasion of Syria; by the waters of Megiddo Sisera was defeated; Gideon won a victory in the valley of Jezreel; and in sight of the hill of Megiddo Saul met disaster at the hands of the Philistines, moving David to write his lament on the fall of the mighty. Near Megiddo, too, King Josiah was slain by the Egyptians when, like the gallant Albert of Belgium, he ventured to oppose Pharaoh Necho, who was marching across his territory to attack Babylon.

The defeat of Josiah made Judah tributary to Egypt and impressed itself on the national imagination as the Waterloo, or the Marne, of the Jewish race. Thus it was that the prophet fixed on Armageddon as the symbol of the conflict he foretold.

* * * * *

George Eliot's Centenary

*She Was Born
Near Nuneaton
in November, 1819*

THE English midland town of Nuneaton, in Warwickshire, is celebrating the centenary of George Eliot, born November 22, 1819. The town has changed greatly since Mary Ann Evans lived there as a girl. It is moving with the times, the mayor says. The house where she was born—the old farmhouse in Arbury Park—is still standing, but when Mary Ann was four months old the family moved to Griff House, a pleasant old ivy-covered house on the Coventry Road, which is now a dairy school of the Warwickshire County Council.

Nuneaton was a quiet market town in those days, but it has grown noisy and populous since the development of the near-by coal-fields. It is proud, however, of its "great citizen," as the Bishop of Birmingham calls her, and the cost of the celebration is being defrayed "out of the rates," as is the English way of putting it. George Eliot put Nuneaton on the map. In "Janet's Repentance" she calls it "Milby." Arbury Hall is her "Cheverel Manor," and the Newdegate Arms is her "Oldenport Arms" in "Scenes from Clerical Life," while the Red Lion is identified as her "Bull Hotel." Nuneaton streets live in those earlier stories of hers, and people who walked them only yesterday were identified as the originals of certain characters, for, as George Eliot said herself, she drew her portraits with too uncautious a hand.

When her early works appeared there was great curiosity among the townspeople as to who the mysterious and gifted George Eliot was, and suspicion fastened on a Mr. Liggins, who had some local reputation as a poet. Liggins was not unwilling to pose as a writer of clever fiction, but when the public was about to subscribe money to help this supposed literary genius, Miss Evans was forced to reveal her identity as George Eliot. That was in 1857, after she had gone to live with George Henry Lewes, whom Douglas Jerrold described as the ugliest man in London. Lewes died in 1878. In May, 1880, at the age of sixty-one, she again amazed her friends by marrying John Walter Cross, a friend of long standing, but she died at Christmas-time that same year.

They are now erecting a memorial to George Eliot in Nuneaton, and at a recent meeting to promote this worthy object, Canon Blofield, of Saltley College, proposed as the toast of the evening: "The borough of George Eliot."

THE STAGE

THE STORY OF THE ACTORS' STRIKE, WRITTEN DURING AND AFTER THE EVENT

By Matthew White, Jr.

"AN unprecedented condition of affairs in the theatrical world, due to no fault of its own," was the heading of this department last January, when I reported the darkening of many houses owing to the ravages of the influenza. I little realized then that before a year had elapsed the first clause in this sentence would again be a timely phrase. The actors' strike began on August 7, with the closing of ten theaters in New York. In less than three weeks the number of dark houses had risen to twenty-one, and the strike had spread to Chicago. As I write, the end is not yet, and what one man described to me as "child's play," promises to lose millions of dollars to those most nearly concerned—actors, managers, playwrights, costume-makers, scene-painters—in fact, all who have any part or lot in entertaining the public in the higher-class theaters.

What was it all about, and who started it? Briefly, the actors wanted eight performances to constitute a week's work, with extra pay for any over that number, such as the Sunday night show, which is usual in the Western theaters. They also asked half-pay for rehearsals, if these lasted more than four weeks, and the settlement of all differences by arbitration.

The managers were willing to grant these demands, but stuck at one other point—a recognition of the Actors' Equity Association, by which the strike was ordered. They had had more or less amicable dealings with this society during the six years of its existence, but their love for it grew cold the instant the Equity affiliated itself with the American Federation of Labor. It is not likely that they foresaw the possibility of an actors' walkout, despite the threats of such a revolt made in mid-summer of the most successful hot-weather season the New York theater had ever enjoyed. They may have recalled the horror of certain players when the Theatrical Syndicate was formed, and the outcry raised against the commercialization of an art

consecrated by Shakespeare. Could these be the same folk who, decorated with white sashes, were parading up and down in front of the few houses whose casts refused to join them, endeavoring to persuade the public to stay away? But if the managers have the right to organize, surely the actors should be accorded the same privilege, argue these wearers of sock and buskin; and as the days and weeks passed, each side grew more determined, angry words were exchanged, and the breach constantly widened.

Peculiarly difficult was the position in which David Belasco and George Cohan found themselves. Both prominent members of the Managers' Producing Association, each was also an actor. Although it may not be generally known, Belasco in his time has played no fewer than one hundred and seventy-two parts, including *Hamlet* and *Uncle Tom*. Both had become widely known as stanch friends of the actor; and yet it would have been treachery to desert their brothers in management for what might be regarded as purely sentimental reasons. Indeed, both Belasco and Cohan seem to have been more outspoken than the rest in their loyalty to the Managers' Association, declaring that rather than give in to the Equity they would never produce another play. Cohan resigned from both the Lambs and the Friars, and Belasco from the Lambs.

A curious feature of the situation is the fact that three of the managers have actresses for wives—Ziegfeld, who is the husband of Billie Burke; William A. Brady, for whom Grace George keeps house; and Adolph Klauber, with Jane Cowl as his better half.

The strike worked especial hardship to Mr. Klauber, whose first venture as a producer was to have been submitted to the judgment of Broadway on the very night when the outbreak started. One of its authors—a woman whom I happen to know—had been working for years to achieve a

New York *première*. To get as close to it as this and then to have the cup of joy snatched from her lips through a quarrel with which she had no concern, can only be compared with the experience that fell to another playwright of my acquaintance. For many weary moons he had been endeavoring to place a script. Both New York and London spurned it, but at last—

wonder of wonders!—Paris looked upon the piece with favor, and it was billed for the Comédie Française when the world war intervened and stopped it.

Hard hit by the heavy loss of royalties owing to the closing of so many theaters, thirteen of the playwrights got together in the second week of the walkout and endeavored to patch up a peace. The man—



LALLA SELBINI, ONE OF THE SPECIALTY ARTISTS IN THE NEW SPECTACLE AT THE HIPPODROME, "HAPPY DAYS"

From a photograph by White, New York



HELEN FREEMAN, LEADING WOMAN IN "JOHN FERGUSON," THE TRAGEDY THAT RAN ALL SUMMER IN NEW YORK

From a photograph by Francis Bruguiere, New York

agers would not listen to them, whereupon the authors in their turn organized; so possibly, when the present quarrel is a thing of the past, the playwrights may start another. They would do well to remember, however, that while they might attack the managers by bringing out their own plays—as some of them do—they cannot get along without actors. The players, on the other hand, can write their own material, to say nothing of having Shakespeare and other authors of the past to fall back upon.

Partizans of either side in the fight were bitter in their denunciation of the methods employed by the opposition.

"Why," an adherent of the managers would declare, "the players' deliberate breach of their contracts puts them right in a class with the Germans and the scrap of paper they tore up in the shape of their treaty with Belgium!"

On the other hand, Ethel Barrymore, in an interview for the *New York Times*, plaintively exclaimed:

"And it is so little we ask! We never realized how hard the managers were till they refused us that little. Why, they are behaving exactly like the Kaiser and the whole Prussian military crowd. Their argument is that of force."

A new element was injected into the squabble in its third week by the organization of a second association of players—the Actors' Fidelity League—siding with the managers, having for its president George M. Cohan, who resigned from the managers' body in order that he could accept the new office with a clear conscience. Louis Mann was chosen as vice-president, William Collier as treasurer, and among the directors are David Warfield, Holbrook Blinn, and Fay Bainter. If the schism is to be permanent, the splitting up of the theatrical field into two hostile camps is going to be a terrific handicap in the casting of a play. Imagine another piece on the order of "Lightnin'" coming along, and not being able to engage Frank Bacon for the leading part because he happens to belong to the A. E. A. instead of the A. F. L.! By these latter initials I do not mean the American Federation of Labor, which has cast in its lot with the Equity, but the Actors' Fidelity League.



ETHEL BARRYMORE, STARRING UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE CHARLES FROHMAN COMPANY,
IN A NEW PLAY BY ZOE AKINS, "DECLASSÉE"

From a copyrighted photograph by the Strauss-Peyton Studio, Kansas City



BETTY COMPSON, IN THE PHOTOPLAY VERSION OF "THE MIRACLE MAN," WHICH FIRST APPEARED AS A STORY IN THIS MAGAZINE

Funds for the strikers were obtained by a series of literally all-star performances at the huge Lexington Opera House, where one could see—at the top price of two dollars, and in one bill—Ethel and Lionel Barrymore and Conway Tearle in the sec-

ond act from "Camille"; Frank Tinney and Pearl White in an amusing colloquy; Ed Cantor, W. C. Fields, and Van and Schenck in three acts from this year's Follies; Marie Dressler in a unique number showing why it need not take twelve weeks

to rehearse a chorus; and a striking number paraphrasing *Mark Antony's* oration over *Cæsar's* body, declaimed by Brandon Tynan as an appeal for justice to the actor.

This last was written by Percival Knight and Hassard Short, and Broadway's most prominent actors made up a mob of eight hundred, gradually revealed on the Lexington's huge stage as the lights went up. Seldom have I seen so effective a spectacle arranged without the aid of scenery or costume; and when one reflected that all this was not mere play-acting, but the real thing, coming from the striking actors as a unique way of presenting their side of the issue, the impression made was one not soon forgotten.

As the third week of the strike rounded out, a bombshell was thrown into the Equity camp by the new contract offered to the actors through the recently organized Actors' Fidelity League. This granted even more liberal concessions than the Equity had asked for in the first place—except that it withheld recognition of the Equity. What the managers hoped for by this arrangement was of course that enough members of the Equity would flock over to the standard of the Fidelity to sway the balance in the latter's direction; but as I write there is no evidence of any such stampede.

Ethel Barrymore failed to report for rehearsals of a new comedy by Zoe Akins, to be produced at the Empire Theater, under the auspices of the Charles Frohman Company. The next night she led the Equity ball at the Astor with her uncle, John Drew, who promised to return to the stage as *Sir Peter* to his niece's *Lady Teazle* in a revival of "The School for Scandal," to include John Barrymore as *Charles Surface*, and Lionel as the sleek villain, *Joseph*. Other activities of the Equity are also under way, not only in New York, but elsewhere.

The American Federation of Labor, with the return of its president, Samuel Gompers, from Europe, came out squarely on the Equity's side. The Federation's indorsement insures the support of the stagehands' and musicians' unions, which closed even Thurston, the magician, on the eve of his appearance at the Globe.

There was much speculation as to whether Charles Dillingham's other house, the Hippodrome, would be permitted to open. The Equity decided that as here twelve performances were given every week,

and paid for accordingly, the same as vaudeville acts, there was no infringement of their rights; so the big show was allowed to go on. And big it certainly is, although the title, "Happy Days," would not lead one to expect the really great spectacle one gets after the juvenile portion of the entertainment has been run off.

Certain difficulties over patent rights having been adjusted, the great tank is again in operation, and one can see the marching maidens step intrepidly beneath the waters, which close over their heads without giving a sign of the safety zones into which, of course, they disappear. Over and above this marvel, which must be particularly impressive to those who have never seen it before, there are a number of diving girls, including one who makes her plunge into the tank from the Hippodrome's loftiest reaches, so that if you have a seat down in front you may need a mackintosh to protect you from the flying spray.

Nor is the real circus element lacking this time, for Poodles Hanneford is on hand with the only stunts in the ring I care about looking at—I mean those done with a comedy tinge. I have never seen the equal of this young man, who appears able to fly to a galloping horse's back from any direction and stick there as if it were a magnet that drew and held him. Two particularly effective numbers are achieved by directly opposite means—one "The Hall of Colors," in which marching actors are combined with block effects in scenery with fetching results—the other a mere invitation to the audience to sing the old songs thrown on the screen, as was done on the New Amsterdam roof a season or so ago, to a banjo accompaniment.

I have not mentioned the bookstore, a novel fashion of introducing costumes of every period of the world's history, nor Bert Levy, who is back again with his unique one-minute sketches, nor Powers's elephants in new stunts, nor a dozen other acts which go to make up the best bill, as a whole. I have ever seen at the Hippodrome. I had written that it was fortunate this was so, with not a single theater on Broadway open in August's closing week, when ordinarily there would be at least twenty competing for patronage, when the stage-hands at the Hippodrome suddenly walked out in sympathy with the Equity, thus closing the city's biggest playhouse. The difficulty was adjusted, however, through the voluntary



FAIRE BINNEY, SISTER OF CONSTANCE BINNEY, AN INGÉNUË IN THE NEW PLAY
BY RACHEL CROTHERS, "HE AND SHE "

From a photograph by Abbe, New York



ARLEEN HACKETT, ONE OF THE PRINCIPALS IN THE NOVELTY PLAY, "A VOICE IN THE DARK"

From a photograph by White, New York

resignation of Mr. Dillingham, who felt that his membership in the Managers' Producing Association was the cause of the trouble, and who gallantly laid himself on the altar of sacrifice so that salaries should not be lost to the hundreds of Hippodrome employees. Thus, after only a brief eclipse, "Happy Days" dawned again.

Meanwhile the strike had spread to Washington and Boston, with the prospect that the entire country would be affected. Then, after the conflict had lasted four weeks and a day, as astounding a finish was reached as any audience could demand in a drama. For, following upon all the personal bickerings, harsh words, and virulent threats, at a meeting held at the Hotel St. Regis, lasting from Friday evening, September 5, until the early hours of Satur-

day morning, an agreement was concluded which was hailed with satisfaction, and even jubilation, by all parties—the managers, the Equity Association, the Fidelity League, and the American Federation of Labor. Can you imagine anything more extraordinary?

The settlement was brought about mainly through the efforts of that clever playwright, Augustus Thomas, representing the new association of stage writers, who contrived to bring both sides of the controversy face to face for the first time during the fracas. Mr. Thomas achieved a remarkable diplomatic feat, and deserves every one's gratitude. The Equity members have won recognition of their association and the granting of all their demands, with a minimum pay for the chorus of thirty dollars a

week in New York and thirty-five dollars on the road; the managers are delivered from the threatened bugbear of a "closed shop," and the Fidelity League is acknowledged as a permanent organization.

Furthermore, there is to be no black-list against anybody, all lawsuits are to be discontinued, and all disputes are to be settled by an arbitration committee of three, one of whom is to be chosen by the actors, another by the managers, and the third by both jointly. The whole agreement is made for a period of five years, ending with the close of the theatrical season in June, 1924, and the actors, stage-hands, and musicians have agreed not to go out on any sympathetic strike meanwhile.

Thus was brought to a close the most disastrous interruption of theater traffic in the history of the stage. The money lost to the amusement world must have run up into millions of dollars, and one cannot add, as I did in my account of the flu's ravages last January, "due to no fault of its own." But by-gones are now happily by-gones. No one is going to point a finger at any person or persons who may have been responsible for starting that month of unhappy memories. Rather will all join in acclaiming the skilled diplomatist from Missouri who was instrumental in ending it.

NEW SHOWS WITH A RUSH

After a month of enforced inactivity, the New York theaters resumed business more speedily than one would have considered possible, taking into account the causes that interrupted their traffic. In striking contrast to the three houses that were operating on Friday night, September 5, by the following Wednesday twenty-five were open for business, with fresh *premieres* scheduled for almost every evening.

The first new piece was "Up from Nowhere," by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson, with Norman Trevor as the self-styled "new American" of Portuguese extraction, possessed of a big fortune made in the shipping business and of an utter disregard for the conventions. In trying to convince his son that a certain blue-blooded daughter of an ancient race is seeking to marry him for his money, he falls in love with her himself, and after four very tedious acts, including much bad acting by a mostly incompetent cast, succeeds in carrying off the prize. The play needs cutting of the most drastic description; and

although Mr. Trevor is an undeniable artist in all he does, it seems a pity that the management placed an Englishman in a rôle that one cannot help feeling would have been more convincing in the hands of some native-born player—Richard Bennett, for instance.

It is a pleasure to record that the first score for the freshly started season was achieved by the new producer and playwrights to whom I have already alluded as falling victims to the strike on the very evening of their proposed Broadway opening. This was only a farce, with the weak title of "Nightie Night," but with a story and a speed so infectiously humorous that one has little hesitation in predicting for it a lengthy career. And, praise be, there is no bedroom taint therein.

The piece was written by two women, Martha M. Stanley and Adelaide Matthews, and was presented by Adolph Klauber, for several years dramatic critic of the *New York Times*, and more recently associated with the Selwyns in management. Not only does his selection of "Nightie Night" indicate that he knows what is likely to entertain audiences, but he has pitched on just the sort of people to act it, from Francis Byrne as the innocent husband who finds a former flame installed as a tenant of his apartment, to Grant Mills as the well-meaning brother-in-law who puts the unlucky real-estate deal through.

Grace George has returned to the stage after a year's absence, but in a vehicle so frail that I doubt whether it holds together long enough to be compared with this comment. And more's the pity, not only because the leading character fitted Miss George to delightful perfection, but light comedies are so seldom come by that the failure of one tends more than ever to the discouragement of writers who might otherwise essay others, perhaps with success.

"She Would and She Did" was written by Mark Reed, a young man from Illinois, who took Professor Baker's well-known course at Harvard, went to war, and returned to find that his first play had been accepted. It is delicate in plot to the texture of thistledown, revolving wholly around the efforts of *Frances Nesmith* to reinstate herself in the golf-club from which she has been suspended for sixty days owing to a display of temper that moved her to damage the green with her mashie. The first act is charming to a degree, the second lets



MARY MILES MINTER, STAR IN THE MOVIES WITH THE REALART PICTURES CORPORATION,
HER LATEST RELEASE BEING "ANNE OF THE GREEN GABLES"

From a photograph by Monroe



FRANCINE LARRIMORE, AS SHE APPEARS IN THE
THIRD ACT OF THE SPOKEN PLAY
SENSATION, "SCANDAL"

From her latest photograph by Lewis-Smith, Chicago

down considerably, and the last is hopelessly amateurish.

But young Mr. Reed—he looks a mere boy—need not be discouraged. It is only once in a blue moon that a first play wins out. I recall distinctly the sad failures of initial efforts by Avery Hopwood and Roi Cooper Megrue, to name only a couple. To make three acts out of an episode that must inevitably seem so unimportant to most audiences would be a *tour de force* for a playwright with years of practise. That he did well enough to attract the notice of so clever an artist as Miss George, and to hold the attention of his public for at least half the evening, is evidence sufficient that he has in him the makings of a writer in a dramatic field less diligently tilled than any other.

The new season is already prolific in offering the work of new writers. Another neophyte represented is Ralph E. Dyar, with "A Voice in the Dark," an addition to the many murder mysteries that audiences have recently been asked to ferret out, if they can, before the final curtain falls. This time actual novelty of presentation enters into the game, for one scene shows us in pantomime what a deaf woman is supposed to hear, while another reveals what a blind man hears.

Of course, this is mere theatrical trickery, and the story arranged to set it forth has been built in a rather labored fashion; but the tricks themselves are most effectively worked out by means of a cast of excellent quality. Florine Arnold is corking as the irritable deaf woman, and Arleen Hackett plays in just the right key as her nurse. For the rest, there are Olive Wyndham, Anne Sutherland, William B. Mack, and William Boyd, and some good work is contributed by a young newcomer, Stewart Wilson.

Broadway has seen "Scandal," and has followed the example of London's West End and Chicago's Loop by succumbing to its frank sex lure. Written so poorly that one can scarcely credit its author with being the same Cosmo Hamilton who gave us "The Blindness of Virtue," the fascination of Francine Larrimore, who enacts the self-willed heroine, is to my mind its



DORIS KENYON, LEADING WOMAN IN "THE GIRL IN THE LIMOUSINE," ONE OF THE
MANY NEW FARCES

From a photograph by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York

only redeeming feature. Formerly in farce—"Some Baby," "Double Exposure," "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath," to mention three of them—and more recently in "Some Time," a musical comedy, Miss Larrimore steps into the emotional ranks without tearing passion to tatters. She and Charles Cherry are starred in "Scandal," which, brought out at the Thirty-Ninth Street Theater on September 12, will probably run straight through the season, judging by the crush at the opening performances.

Its story is that of a fashionable girl thirsting for adventure. Going unattended to a portrait-painter's rooms, for the mere lark of it, she is discovered there by her family, and to save the present she borrows trouble from the future by declaring that she is secretly married to a man who lives across the hall—a man whom her people had been anxious to have her wed.

When he threatens to claim his rights, she is terribly angry, and then, when he has completely cowed her by his masculine masterfulness, he leaves her with the assertion that she possesses for him not the faintest possible appeal. Thus those who have been lured to see the piece through its reputed "daring" nature, are cheated of whatever they expected to behold.

Nobody is told just what happens next, for in the last act a month has elapsed, and we see the couple on a pretended honeymoon, the family still being unaware that they are not married. The conveniences, however, are carefully observed, and the two, though deeply in love with each other, put as much distance between them as a large mansion will provide. The movie clinch, of course, is as inevitable as ten minutes to eleven, when it occurs—which reminds me that "Scandal" has already been seen in the films, so that the posters are forced to proclaim the present version as a "spoken play."

A cheering sign of the freshly started season was a loose-leaf announcement in the program of the Longacre Theater stating that the management, in cooperation with Comstock & Gest, producers, desired to secure for that house a standing as the home of high comedy. If this project succeeds, it will give New York one place of amusement where playgoers can be sure of the type of entertainment they will find there, just as they were in the old days of Wallack's and Daly's.

An auspicious beginning has been made

with "Adam and Eva," a comedy of American home life by Guy Bolton and George Middleton. There is a hint of "A Successful Calamity" in the theme of the piece, but the treatment is wholly different, and I congratulate Messrs. Comstock & Gest for not having been frightened off from a predestined success by this slight resemblance to another play in which a rich man worked out his family's redemption by a pretended loss of fortune. In "Adam and Eva" he doesn't do this himself. It is done for him by a young man, the manager of his business, whom he installs in his place at home as father of the family while he himself takes a three months' trip to his rubber-plantations up the Amazon. Here was another opportunity for less courageous managers to say:

"Piffle! What audience will swallow an improbability of that sort?"

But big houses do swallow it every night, with great enjoyment in the process, and will probably continue to do so throughout the theatrical year, for the piece is brightly written and capitally acted. Otto Kruger is *Adam*, the business manager aforesaid, and Ruth Shepley *Eva*, one of the rich man's daughters, who cannot decide between two suitors, so compromises on a third—*Adam*, of course. Very fine is Ferdinand Gottschalk as *Uncle Horace*, who has come on a week-end visit and remained for fifteen years. He, too, is transformed into a hustling business man by the sounding of the go-to-work tocsin, all quite in the "Turn to the Right" manner—than which nothing seems to be surer-fire with the American public just now. But "Adam and Eva" is written on a much higher plane than the usual offering of this type, really justifying its classification as the high-comedy inauguration of the Longacre's new policy.

WHAT "JOHN FERGUSON" DID

The business of producing plays is what might be considered an extra hazardous calling. This is largely due to the fact that managers have no standard by which to determine the correctness of their judgment on any particular piece that may be offered for their inspection. The last shred of any confidence they may have had in themselves must surely have vanished when they witnessed the success of "John Ferguson," a play that almost every one of the regular Broadway producers had turned



FAY Bainter, LEADING WOMAN IN "EAST IS WEST," THE PLAY THAT SHARES WITH "LIGHTNIN'" AND "JOHN FERGUSON" THE DISTINCTION OF RUNNING FROM ONE SEASON INTO THE NEXT ON BROADWAY

From her latest photograph by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York

down for what to them all seemed the strongest possible reason. For was it not a tragedy, without the redeeming note of a romantic setting or a melodramatic mystery that might set the audience guessing? Nevertheless, when the Theater Guild put it on for a week, last April, its reception was the astounding event of the spring sea-

son, and as I write, after mid-September, the piece is still running.

The play is in every way deserving of its success, which reflects credit on a public capable of discerning real merit in drama and acting. Slow-moving as the piece is in its one setting, there is no denying the strength with which it holds one.

Light Verse

IT HAPPENS TO EVERYBODY

WHEN, after a series of sickening thuds, my second-hand motor broke down, I towed it about—while my money held out—to every garage-man in town. Each freely admitted that something was wrong—they dazed me with technical patter, And all of the lot asked for cash on the spot, but differed on what was the matter. One said that the carbon had choked up the gears, one claimed that new cams were essential; Another insisted the spark-plugs had twisted and messed up the left differential. They each took a hack at the engine in turn, and when the last fellow had done The machine was all right; yet, try hard as I might, I couldn't persuade it to run. Bereft of my money and short of my hopes, as the immobile wreck I surveyed, I thought it a shame that the men in that game should all be such dubs at their trade.

A year or two later my vitals went wrong. My breakfast-food wouldn't digest; I suffered from aches and from tremors and quakes; I had shivery chills in my chest. From doctor to doctor I went for relief. Each seemed very pleased to assure me That the outlook was bad, but each of them had a different dope that would cure me. One said that my thorax was stuck to my lungs, and told me that both must come out; One said that my tongue wasn't properly hung; another declared I had gout. "Your spine is too long and your eyes focus wrong," one specialist said with a sigh; While a second was sure that there wasn't a cure, and gave me a fortnight to die. Now, after two months upon diets and pills and mud baths and mustard massages, I think a lot more than I used to of yore of the fellows who run the garages!

Gus M. Teitelbaum

A BACHELOR TO THE SMOKE OF HIS CIGARETTE

WHIRL aloft, curl aloft,
Up toward the rafter;
You are my answer to
Now and hereafter.

Swirl along, twirl along,
Light as a bubble;
You are my laughter at
Life and its trouble.

Flow ahead, blow ahead,
Mocking ambition;
You are my challenge to
Time and tradition.
Hie away, fly away,
Taunting me, only
Keep me from feeling so
Utterly lonely!

Elias Lieberman

TRUTH

HOW interesting it would be
To stop with some good family
In whose household all were constrained
To speak the truth, and truth obtained!

Truth is a thing by all admired;
And—one could leave if one desired!

Ada Munsell

THE ROYAL PUMPKIN

OH, golden daughter of the sun,
Thou callest forth a pean!
How ignorant the scornful bards
Who class thee as plebeian—
A "common vegetable," in fact,
A product of the garden!
Forsooth, such dullards ought to sue
To win thy gracious pardon!

On far-off India's sunny slopes
The gods first saw thee sleeping—
A simple thing in Lincoln green,
And scarcely worth the keeping;
But deep within thine humble heart
They saw thee truly pious,
A creature willing to be led,
And free from crook or bias.

And swiftly o'er the raging seas
The gods, like winsome charmers,
Beguiled and coaxed thee to the land
That bred New England farmers,
And shed the sunshine and the frost
That wooed thee from thy sadness,
To make thee big and plump and sweet,
A golden sphere of gladness!

And then they brought thee to the dame
Who ruled the Yankee kitchen;
She decked thee in thy royal robes
And made thee most bewitching.
With spices and with sugared sweets,
A mystic, rare creation,
And set thee on thy pastry throne,
The idol of a nation!

Charles Irvin Junkin

A HARD SUM

MY hair owns up to forty,
My mouth to thirty-five,
My eyes perhaps to thirty;
But how can I contrive
To act up to their level
When I have in my heart
A spirit aged just twenty
That will not yet depart?

Anne Coe Mitchell

THE OPTIMIST

THERE was a poet poor who had
The grim wolf at his door.
He did not like the hungry look
The creature always wore.
In vain could he the wolf evade;
By night as well as day
The hungry monster stood on guard,
And would not go away.

But notwithstanding this stern plight,
The poet seemed content.
I marveled at his unconcern,
And asked him what it meant.
Said he: "The thing looks bad, I know.
To that I quite agree;
And yet I fear no bite because
I've tamed the wolf, you see!"

Blanche Elizabeth Wade

THE GREAT CITY'S SPELL

THE city was strange, and he knew not its
ways;
They were out of his range, and he moved in a
daze.

He felt all ajog in the midst of the crowd,
With its clamor of voices so raucous and loud.

He mingled aghast in the scurrying rush;
The world seemed a chaos of hurry and crush.

He was all out of gear in the stress and the press;
But he soon found some cheer in the girls and
their dress;

And ere long—why, he liked it! He wished to
remain!

"I'll go see my folks, then I'll come back again."

And now he's plunged in without ever a worry,
And he, too, is part of the town and its hurry!

Carol Purse

TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE

I AM enthralled by Sylvia's smiles;
I am enslaved by Laura's wiles.
If Sylvia speaks, I dream of brooks
That sing through shady woodland nooks.
If it is Laura's voice I hear,
I think of thrush-notes lyric-clear.
I'm in a parlous case, you see,
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee!

I am enmeshed by Sylvia's hair,
And Laura's locks are like a snare.
On Sylvia's cheeks there shows the rose;
On Laura's there are sunset glows.
While Sylvia's eyes are heavenly blue,
Yet Laura's are celestial, too.
So you will sense I'm all at sea
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee!

I ponder what fate has in store
For such a luckless bachelor.
My lot is desperate, unless
Another pities my distress—
Some girl still more adorable
Than those who hold me in their spell—
Some peerless girl who'll rescue me
From Tweedledum and Tweedledee!

Clinton Scollard

DARING

YOUR blowing hair, your dainty air,
Your lips—a pair of roses rare;
You are so wonderfully fair—
And yet I do not dare!
A bird up in the tree above
Is singing of his happy love.
You have no right to be so fair,
Unless I dare—
So there!

Herbert Webster

TO STELLA

I'EST other folks should carry tales,
I'm willing to admit
I'm not one of the meekest males;
I've carried on a bit!

I've loved the ladies, dark and fair,
The kind who dance and sing,
The frivolous and debonair;
In short, I've had my fling!

But pray believe me when I say
That sort of thing is past;
'Tis not first love I offer—nay,
But, better far, 'tis last!

Harold Seton

The Business of Those Boys

BY ED CAHN

Illustrated by M. Leone Bracker

MOE SIMIS and his friend Sam Baum watched the world go by on the seaside board walk and discussed their personal affairs.

"Listen, Moe; all we got to do is get a little more capital. We're young yet; we're smart like tacks, which everybody tells us. We got a good idea, and when opportunity knocks at our door—"

Sam showed his even, white teeth in a smile.

"Say, Moe, if opportunity should once be such a foolisher as to knock on your door, he could right then make his will, for you'd hug him to death."

"No, Sam; give me credit—I'd tie a string to him. Say, look who's coming, all decorated up!"

"I see them. *Oi, oi*, with a shine on the shoes! A cane each! New hats;—new suits; three-dollar ties, bought two for five dollars, maybe. Such a wealthy look; such a gorgeousness! Hello, Kink Solomon!" he called to the glorious ones. "What did you do with the kveens from Sheba?"

The approaching elegants did not wait until they quite arrived to answer.

"We're going to meet them here."

They smiled like sunflowers in the sunshine as sundry heads in the passing multitude turned to see where that loud voice came from.

"You two fellers sure do believe in advertising, don'tcha, Harry?" Sam Baum remarked.

Mr. Meyer accepted what he considered a compliment.

"Sure—make the public rubber! That's our motter—ain't it, Joe?"

Mr. Lesser took out a case that glittered like gold and extracted a cigarette therefrom. Sam and Moe, who hadn't had a smoke for twenty minutes, got all ready to help themselves with thanks; but the cigarette-case disappeared into Mr. Lesser's

pocket, and he borrowed a match from Sam with which to light up.

"I got only a few matches left," he observed as he tossed the burned one away and took a long inhalation with every appearance of enjoyment.

Mr. Meyer, who was already smoking, laughed with huge appreciation.

"Ain't Joe the saving guy, though? He'll wind up with a fortune yet."

Sam Baum's voice was acrid.

"He maybe might, but it would be other people's money. By the way, how's the auction business coming, boys?"

"Better than what your business is, I betcha, for it's been so good that we could retire right now if we wanted to."

"*Oi*, what a killing you must have made some place! So you are now pluteykrats, hey? And you have bought the clothes right off some song-and-dance team," Moe scoffed, in the unbelieving tone of a man who wishes to serve notice that it is useless to attempt to cast dirt in his eyes.

A wide grin of triumph overspread the rather foxy countenances of Messrs. Lesser and Meyer.

"We," said Mr. Meyer in the same impressive voice in which he was wont to auction a sixty-cent fire-gilt watch-chain for the pitiful sum of four dollars—"we are going to marry money."

"Barrels of money," supplemented Mr. Lesser.

"Aw, go on!" snorted Sam. "In the first place I don't believe it, and in the second place no girls with money would know you two fakers—unless maybe they was counterfeiters' daughters."

The other pair ignored this, smiling as much as to say:

"We knew it would make you crazy with jealousy, but wait until you hear the rest."

Mr. Meyer flicked the ash from his cigarette onto Moe Simis's coat-sleeve.

"Yes, we ain't slow plodders like you two. We made a pile of money since we went partners in the jewelry auction business, and now we're going partners in something else. It's the two Polsky sisters we're marrying. Mr. Polsky, he is retired. He was once a big dealer in antiques. And you know them guys—they gotta have adding-machines to count their mazuma. The girls is extra fine—peaches—elegant and swell, and each has got a education like a college professor."

Sam and Moe signified their opinion of this story by holding their noses as if in the presence of ancient eggs.

"Honestly, I'm telling you the pure truth," protested Mr. Meyer.

"Aw, these here fellows wouldn't believe the truth if they told it themselves," said Mr. Lesser, and pulled out his watch. "Let them stick around a minute or two more and see for themselves how Mr. and Mrs. Polsky and Miss Rhea and Miss Hattie Polsky will meet us here to keep the date we made with them to take them to the Casino for dinner. Lettum see for themselves if they is swell or if they ain't."

"Lots of things is swell and still they ain't kosher," remarked Sam.

"Look here, then. Watch us, we ask you—look!"

A little wizen man with a long, brown beard, wearing very new clothes and a tall silk hat; an enormously fat lady in black silk, displaying about a quart of yellow diamonds; and two of the prettiest girls that Moe and Sam had ever seen, were approaching:

"There they are," gloated the auctioneers. "Don't they look like money in the bank? Don't they look strictly kosher? Rhea, the little girl, is Lesser's, and I'm going to marry Hattie."

"All settled a'ready, huh?" Moe asked jealously.

"Just as good. Well, g'-by!" They advanced to meet the smiling Polskys, with their hats in their hands and the light of the electrics shining on their sleek black hair.

"Looks like they were welcome, all right," observed Sam. "Let's walk over closer, Moe. Gee, ain't that little one a peacherino?"

"Quick, let's butt in and make them introduce us."

But Mr. Lesser saw them coming, and got the party instantly under way.

"Yow, Sam, already I found out something. Them low-livers is scared to have the Polskys talk to us."

"Sure they are, for they got a conscience on them like a garbage-tin. I betcha them Polskys haven't got a idea what a blood-sucking couple leeches they're knowing so friendly."

Moe sighed.

"Ain't it a hard, cruel woild, Sam? A couple honest boys like us could work like a galleyful of slaves all their lives and hardly make nothing, while a pair burglars like Lesser and Meyer marries a lot of capital what could by rights only belong to respectable men, and besides gets thrown in extra nice girls!"

Sam nodded mournfully.

"The way this woild is run is a howling crime. But all we need is a little more money yet to make good, anyway. Wifes," he added, "is only a extra."

Sam's eyes followed the retreating Rhea hungrily, however.

"Yes, but them Polsky girls are nice; anybody could see it. Also terribly pretty. I like the tall one with the auburn curls the best—and Hattie is my favorite name, too."

"All right, Moe, I'm satisfied—because I like Rhea the most. We ought to get us such a pair ladies. They would be a expense, but—"

His voice trailed away in thought. They began to stroll in the direction that the Polsky party had taken, and their busy brains began to scheme.

"Moe, I like the looks of the Polsky girls."

"Yes, they look good to me; and papa's got money, them porch-climbers said."

"Oh, that don't make it so; but he looks kinda like it, anyway."

"Meyer is a no-good, and Lesser is the same, only wiose; so, Sam, there's only one thing for us to do."

"I get you, Moe. We gotta cut them out, in case they accidentally told the truth, and are going to marry the girls. Also because they are a couple of swell-dressed bums that's all right maybe at a fake auction, but got no right with ladies."

"Sure! Now, first, we get a rating on Polsky, and find out if he really is a retired antiquer."

II

THEY hurried their steps and were in time to see the party vanish into the



HATTIE WAS POLITE ABOUT IT, BUT THERE WAS AN UNMISTAKABLE EFFORT TO REMAIN
UPON A FORMAL FOOTING

Casino restaurant. There was a veranda encircling the room, and they walked around it until they found a window where they could peer in unobserved. They saw the Polsky party seated close to the open casement; heard the dulcet tones of the young ladies' voices; heard Joe Lesser order a most impressive meal—and turned away, the certain victims of Cupid's arrows and filled with a determination to stop at nothing.

They spoke to the head waiter, and found that the family was known to him.

"They're newly rich," he said with lofty tolerance, "but not so bad as some. They're living at one of the beach hotels 'count of the old lady—too blame fat or something. Those birds with them have the reputation of bein' buzzards, but you

never can tell. They are learnin' them things. Why, when they started to come in here first, Mrs. Polsky up and asked me in a voice you could have heard from here to the car-barns what the asparagus-holders was for. But they're learning. They've got to where they can look a hole through a waiter, though every time Polsky wants a hassock for his game foot he calls it either a what-zis or a casserole."

"We heard that the girls are engaged to those fellers."

"Thasso? Well, they are still at the 'miss' and 'mister' stage around here. It's my opinion the girls don't like 'em, but they've got ma razzle-dazzled, and she's trying to crowd them down the girls' very necks."

The friends went away, found seats in

the shadow where they could watch the Casino door, and gave themselves up to earnest thought.

Just when they were convinced that their quarry must have died and been interred indoors, the Polskys and the auctioneers came out again. Sam and Moe flattened themselves against their inconspicuous bench and pricked up their ears after the manner of the most alert of jack-rabbits.

Mr. Lesser was proposing an automobile ride on the hard-packed sand just above the surf line. Mr. Meyer was strong for a dance at the pier pavilion.

The watchers were sure that the girls were not keen for either. They were very polite about it, but there was an unmistakable effort to remain upon a formal footing with these young men who by look and tender smile, by florid, admiring phrases, tried every instant to storm their citadel.

Mr. Polsky looked tired and a little bewildered, as if he wished for nothing but a chance to retire from the public gaze and remove his collar and shoes.

Mama Polsky had an overfed, bilious look. She turned yellow at the thought of a ride, and yet it was plain that she did not wish to let these stylish young suitors slip out of her fingers.

"Listen, Mr. Meyer," she interrupted the excuses of Rhea. "Papa and me ain't so well to-night—getting old, you know. We couldn't stand this high-living. We go back by our hotel, and you and Mr. Lesser should take the girls to the dancing."

This was greeted by loud cries of approval from the swains, a swift, appealing look for mercy from Hattie, and a gusty sigh of relief from papa. In vain the dutiful Rhea tried to persuade her mother that she needed her ministrations.

"No, go by the pavilion, my children; have the good time while you are young. Wait until you are married to stay home." This with a crafty, sidelong look at Joe Lesser that made Sam Baum fairly grind his envious teeth.

"Be home at eleven thoity sharp," said Papa Polsky as they parted.

Moe and Sam promptly fell in behind those wonderful girls, grimly determined to have an eye upon the doings of that pair of sinfully fortunate auctioneers. They could by no means approve of the proprietorial manner in which Lesser and Meyer

took possession of the young ladies' arms, and inferred from the rigid spinal columns of the owners thereof that it was not enjoyed.

In the pavilion they stood well back in the fringe of onlookers, watching them dance—filled with delight at the ladies' grace; with disgust at the forward manners of their partners; with a burning ambition to interfere and rearrange things.

At the end of half an hour Sam could endure it no longer.

"Come along, Moe, let's go jump off the end of the dock. For us there's no luck and no hope. There ain't such a thing as love with first sight, but I've got it and got it terrible. If only I could have that little Rhea, I wouldn't care for even so much money as is in the mint!"

"Don't get a fainting heart, Sam. Look how hard them low-livers are working to get a smile. The girls have got no use for them—ain't that something?"

"A little something," agreed Sam, "but not much. Look at who the Polskys are, Moe, and look at us. O' course, we're honest, but *muhulla* compared to them."

Moe refused to be overwhelmed.

"Remember about the sparrowgrass-holders and the casserole for the old man's feet. He was poor wunst, and he might have a heart in him yet."

Sam clutched his arm excitedly.

"Look at your Hattie! How mad she looks at Joe and how he's hugging her! My golly, what a gall the feller's got! Why don't she bawl him out for it?"

Moe turned pale with wrath, but answered calmly enough:

"How could she—her being a lady? Say, there's the Cohen girls over there. Let's ask them to dance with us. That way we can get close to them *ganevim*. We'll bump into them. The girls will see that we are nice guys, and we will keep so close to them all the time that we will make them introduce us, anyway."

"Go ahead, go ahead!" agreed Moe excitedly.

They descended upon the astonished Misses Cohen, whirled them off, and inside of five minutes more had executed the maneuver.

The music stopped as they apologized. The girls smiled all around; there were general introductions. But, best of all, a pair of clear gray eyes under a crown of auburn hair told Sam frankly that she liked

him on sight; a pair of sober brown eyes broke into a laugh as they flashed the same message to Moe. Meyer and Lesser, none too well pleased, still found temper to flirt instantly with the flattered Misses Cohen.

A multitude of clapping hands won their point. The orchestra-leader took down the

girls knew that the two young men were keeping close to them, and the knowledge seemed like a protection to them from the too-eager ardor of their partners.

After a while they expressed a desire to



THEY FORGOT THAT TO-MORROW WAS ANOTHER DAY AND THAT DUTY WOULD CALL

skip a dance and rest, and they were aware, though their cavaliers were not, that Sam and Moe had heard. Mr. Lesser suggested a walk on the pier in the moonlight, and the girls agreed.

The Misses Cohen thereupon found themselves returned to the seats they had occupied among the wall-flowers, for Sam and Moe stepped out into the moonlight, too.

"no encore" sign, lifted his baton, and they were off again.

Things happened quickly then, while the music throbbed happily over the sound of hundreds of dancing feet, and the gentle waves spent themselves with a whispering sound on the dark sand beneath them.

Hattie and Rhea followed the friends with approving glances. Once Rhea smiled faintly at Sam, and Hattie's fair cheek glowed under Moe's open admiration. The

Discreetly they pussyfooted in the background while the quartet ahead of them passed through the brief shadows thrown by closed booths into vivid patches of moonlight. The Lesser and Meyer voices were lowered from their usual stridency to an amorous hush. It was plain they were making love while the moon shone. The girls' chatter had an increasingly nervous note.

Suddenly there were two little screams in quick succession, followed by the sounds

of two hands brought sharply against impudent faces.

"They're trying to kiss them! Here's our chance!"

Moe and Sam leaped forward. The Misses Polsky, much perturbed, stepped from shadow to light, their escorts half a step behind them with hands held to smarting cheeks.

"Loafers! Fresh mugs!" cried the chums.

Each of them landed on the point of his enemy's chin with skill and considerable force. Two offenders bit the dust, and two arms were politely offered to the rescued ladies. There was a burst of excited chatter on both sides, to which nobody listened.

"Let's get off this pier and have a little dance together," suggested Moe.

They did, and if their doom needed sealing that did it. Moe fell so deep in love that there was never to be any falling out for him. Sam surrendered to Hattie without a struggle. They forgot that there was such a thing in the world as capital; forgot that they might have killed two rascally auctioneers and been compelled to stand trial for murder; that to-morrow was another day, and that duty would call. All they knew was that the ocean sang softly, the music played; that two youthful figures obeyed their every guidance; that two pairs of eyes looked up at them and said:

"I like you."

"I'm glad you found me."

"I'm so happy I could die!"

III

IN no time the big clock over the door pointed to eleven.

"We've got to go!"

Brought back to earth, the boys cast an uneasy glance in the direction from which two temporarily vanquished rivals might arrive with a tremendous thirst for vengeance. They ransomed wraps from the check-room bandit and got safely away from the big, glaring doorway without a challenge from the surrounding darkness.

"We are staying at the Carolina, just down the beach," said Hattie Polsky.

"We'll see you home all safe and sound; but first, how about a little supper in the Carolina grill-room?"

The girls gasped with delight at the idea. They knew they'd love it. They guessed, however, that they had better not. They exchanged half-guilty, half-frightened

glances. It was easily to be seen that they were afraid of what mama would say about the affair as it stood, and did not dare any more.

"Aw, come on! It'll be all right. Only a sandwidge and a cup coffee, ladies!" urged Sam.

"Anything in the place that you could fancy to eat or to drink," cried Moe, with a sly kick at the stingy-sounding one.

"Sure, sure—anything! Expense is with us simply nothing. Honestly and truly, I was only thinking of the time."

"Oh, if you are in a hurry, Mr. Baum," teased Rhea.

A little more hesitation, a little more persuasion, and it was agreed. After all, what harm, since they were staying at the Carolina? They would have refreshments in the grill, after which the boys would help them explain to Papa and Mama Polsky, who would be pacing their private parlor waiting up for them.

No expense was spared. Moe attended to the ordering, and if there was one thing that Moe did well it was to arrange a perfect combination of viands. It was great fun getting better acquainted; the minutes fled like the splinters of seconds, and in no time it was midnight. Hattie and Rhea sprang up like twin *Cinderellas* at the first stroke. The waiter was hastily summoned and tipped in a manner to make him bow. They scurried into an elevator as if they feared it would turn into a pumpkin every instant. They shot up to the ninth floor and stood trembling before suite 916.

Mama Polsky opened the door, and there is no denying that the first ten minutes were awkward, but they passed.

Papa, in a yellow velvet dressing-gown, came out of his sleepy bad humor.

"Vell, vell, it looks to me like there ain't no harm done, mutter. You take the girls to bed. I talk me by these young fellers a while."

"Good night; we had a swell time. Papa, you ask them to call!"

"*Koosch!*" said the mother, and shooed them away before her.

Mr. Polsky gazed sharply at his guests.

"Vell, Mr. Simis and Mr. Baum, you bring me safe home mine leedle goils. I tenk you. You tell me Mr. Lesser and dot other feller are no-accounts—such a fake auctioneers. Also that they get fresh with mine daughters the first time I turn me my beck. Already I had me my idees

about them, but what I want to know now is—excuse me—who are you?”

Sam and Moe glanced at each other and smiled modestly.

The old man went on.

“I could see that you are fine-looking, handsome, stylish-dressed young fellers. I just hear from my goils that you are swell dancers and could buy a fine supper in a grill mit hold-up prices. But what business are you in?”

Sam took the floor.

“Well, listen, Mr. Polsky, we are not rich yet. We are only young fellers with a little money saved up. We got a little property—a nice ranch.”

“Rench? What for kind of a rench? Cows? Meats?”

“No, Mr. Polsky, chicken and squabs for the fine-restaurant trade; also eggs. We’re chicken-ranchers.”

“Oh, I see!” Mr. Polsky pulled at a reflective lip with thumb and finger.

“Only in a small way,” interposed Moe. “Don’t get the idea, Mr. Polsky, that we are wealthy, exactly. We got to add to our capital to get going right.”

“A chicken-rentch? Vat a business!”

From the tone it was to be inferred that the father of Hattie and Rhea did not think much of their prospects. The mention of capital, too, seemed to have withered his heart and sewed up his mouth like a pocket.

“Yes, it’s a great business with a great future,” Sam went on cheerily. “We begin small, but we end big. We get exclusive contracts from the big hotels and cafés. We ship all over the country. After a while we have our own poultry-cars with our name, Simis & Baum, in poiple paint on every one.”

“But, y’unnerstand, Mr. Polsky,” Moe cut in again, “we don’t like to talk about ourselves. Much nicer that you hear who we are from somebody else. Mr. Al Frankel, a friend of ours, could call on you and tell you all about us.”

“Yes, Mr. Polsky, he could show you our bank-books and the deed to our ranch if you want to see them. Ask him anything you want.”

They got up and reached for their hats. Polsky chuckled.

“You are great boys, I could easy see that. Is this who-zis, Mr. Frankie, maybe a schatchen, a marriage-broker?” He smiled, as if he guessed that his girls were the object of all this.

“Only wunst in a while, maybe, but mostly a lawyér. A fine feller, Al is. You could rest easy if you give him any business, Mr. Polsky. We could recommend him. Well, good night, Mr. Polsky, we wouldn’t keep you out of bed any longer.”

The old man shrugged.

“The night’s gone, anyhow. You could send your friend if you want to.” He held out his hand. “Come see us to-morrow evening.”

“To-morrow evening, Mr. Polsky, we got a important business engagement, but the next night—”

“All right, all right—come see us the next night.”

He flapped his hands wearily and yawned until the boys thought that the big gap in the brown beard could never be closed. They found themselves outside the door and ringing for the elevator.

IV

It was nearly morning when, back in the city, they routed out one Al Frankel—who from motives of economy slept in his office—and told him the situation.

“All right, I gotcha,” said Frankel. “I call on Mr. Polsky to-morrow afternoon without fail. I tell him you are honest, sober, industrious boys from orthodox people in the old country. I give him an idea of your bank-accounts in good round figures—the rounder the better. I explain how fine that ranch is. I say offhand that anybody what’s far-sighted enough to put capital into the thing will double his money and no risk; but if he shies off, I say you ain’t looking for help, that you’re going to swing it yourselves, that you are only now in town looking around for some incubators cheap. I make him see you are just the kind of ambitious boys to be calling on his girls. That the dope?”

“Poifect!”

Moe thought that it might be well if Rhea and Hattie could hear all this, and Mr. Frankel promised to see that they did. They said good night, and departed, but Sam had an afterthought, and went and hammered Frankel up again.

“Listen, Al—don’t lettum get the idea we’re advertising ourselves.”

“Gee, no!” answered Frankel with great gravity.

“That press-agent stuff makes me tired, anyway,” observed Moe. “Don’t forget to make it good and strong how we’re only



A. H. BLACK

MAMA POLSKY OPENED THE DOOR, AND THERE IS NO DENYING THAT THE FIRST TEN MINUTES WERE AWKWARD

young fellers, but fierce ambitious, and bound to climb up in the world."

"Sure!"

"Say, let us know if the girls hear the spiel, will you, Al?"

"All right! Look for me about eight. I'll go by, and if I nod twice it means that they did. If I lift my hat it means that I only saw the old man."

Once more they parted, and the two boys finally rolled into bed well content with the night's work and pleased with future prospects, though back in their minds lurked the conviction that they were not finished with Messrs. Lesser and Meyer.

V

THE next evening—the evening sacred to the important business engagement of

Moe and Sam—there were two tables reserved by a big window overlooking the sidewalk, in Golden's Café de Luxe. One was a small one with two chairs, the other with four. They were the end tables of adjoining groups constituting the charge of two waiters, and were so close that conversation between them would be very easy.

As the head waiter put the cards marked "reserved" in place on them, he remarked to the interested waiters that the reservation had just come in by telephone; that the man ordering the tables had asked particularly that Nos. 20 and 22 should serve them, and that the connection was broken before he got the names.

The waiters designated by those numbers looked carefully to linen and silver and stood ready.

In a few minutes the head waiter ushered two men to the smaller table. They both wore a pale look of determination over a slightly battered aspect, but their manner was easy to the point of carelessness.

Their waiter stepped up and filled their water-glasses, while his colleague stood by, arms correctly folded, his side towel on his arm and an alert gleam in his watchful eye.

The newcomers did not glance at their serving-man as they ordered a modest meal and unfolded their evening papers. Their waiter's brows shot up to his hair. He seemed about to speak, but, thinking better of it, hustled off kitchenward as a good waiter should.

When he returned, with his high-piled tray held aloft on practised fingers, he saw that the other reserved table was being claimed. As he arrived and set down his burden, he noticed that his customers were sitting back like spectators at a play, a malicious expression of triumph upon their faces, their eyes fixed upon the unhappy waiter—who was seating the newcomers.

"Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Polsky," called the two diners to the newcomers.

The retired dealer in antiques and his lady started, frowned, and nodded frigidly. Their daughters lifted disdainful chins and looked away; but the neighboring pair were not in the least discouraged.

"We told you that you would be sorry for not listening to what we had to tell you. We found out that you were going to be here to-night, and so we had these tables reserved. It ain't because you are so famous that the head waiter called you by name, Polsky—it's because we had it all fixed. How do you like our waiters?"

The Polsky optics turned upon their serving men, and, while Mr. Lesser and Mr. Meyer gave way to a cackle of revengeful mirth, Sam Baum and Moe Simis stood discovered in their waiters' aprons! Stripped of their camouflage, they were plain toilers who had dared to woo the moneyed Polsky maidens; worse, to entertain them in public! Servants masquerading as masters of lavish supper-money and dancers of fashion!

It was a humiliating moment for Sam and Moe; they looked sick and they felt sick.

Papa Polsky sat staring with dropped jaw. Mama turned scarlet and flung one barbed word at them:

"Fakers!"

Rhea was white, but she spoke.

"We never dreamed we'd see you here, Mr. Simis, but—but—good evening!"

She spoke defiantly; but Hattie, after one frozen look at Sam Baum, cast down her eyes and closed her pallid lips tight.

It was not much comfort to see Al Frankel pass close to the window and nod twice to signify that the Polsky girls had heard his little speech about his clients. They would think that it was the veriest pack of lies.

Papa Polsky recovered his voice with a gulp.

"Aha, so this here is your chicken-farm, huh? A fine kittle from fish! A couple fictioneers yous are, and *schnorrers* besides. Bah, wit yous!"

But Sam and Moe were not going to go under without a fight. They let their enemies laugh; then they spoke up bravely.

"No, Mr. Polsky—everything we said was truth, only we didn't tell everything. We ain't beggars. We got the ranch and money saved; we're only working here to get a little more money together. We were going to quit next week."

The old man gave them a long, soul-searching look, at the end of which his eye softened a trifle.

"Vell! Don't talk to me any more; couldn't you see it only makes the hyeeners laugh? Embarrassed like this I never thought I would be. Lookit, everybody is rubbering at us instead of paying attention to their foods."

He flung a libelous look at the other table and picked up a menu upside down.

"Go ahead, kvick; bring us roast chicken all the way round and some green stuffs—salad wit' a full line vegetibbles. What-cha think we oughta have? You're a vaiter; you should know better than I do what we want."

"Waiter, get a move on you!" cackled the harsh voices of Lesser and Meyer.

Coming out of his petrification of horror, Sam banged their dinner down before the revengeful pair, with murder in his eye and black despair in his heart. Then he fled in the wake of Moe, who was making for the merciful concealment of the kitchen as fast as he could.

VI

THEY encountered authority on the other side of the door, and begged so hard for

instant relief from duty that it was granted to them.

"Anyway, Rhea stood by me. She spoke nice to me, no matter how they laughed. She's one fine girl! She's one genuwine sport! But we hadn't oughta tried to keep it dark we was waiters, Moe. We didn't have the right to put them in such a position. No, sir, we never!"

But Moe had no ears for such talk.

"Hattie Polsky turns me down because I'm a waiter, huh? Won't speak to me 'cause I got a apron on and a pair of low-living get-rich-quick's gives us the ha-ha; ashamed before a pair of boiglers that she's been out with a working man! I tell you, Sam, I'm surprised at her. I thought she had in her a heart. I thought to myself she had sense!" He pulled off his apron and stuck it under his arm. "Here's where I quit and show her a thing or two!"

"Same here also," said Sam, and did likewise. "Anyhow, Moe, we ought to be in business for ourselves, and I got to show Rhea that she's right to stick by me. I ain't the kind of guy what stays a waiter always."

The head waiter sought them out.

"It's all right this time; I got your places filled; but don't you pull any more

of this stuff. Say, Moe, here's a card the red-haired girl borried off her father; she told me to be sure to give it to you."

On the face of the card which Moe seized so eagerly was set forth in English the intelligence that B. Polsky was a wholesale buyer of old iron, bottles, rags, and factory waste; that it would be well to patronize him, since he paid the best prices. Meyer had not been so very inaccurate when he had said that his intended father-in-law was a dealer in antiques, Moe reflected, as he turned the card over.

There he read in the quaint characters in which the holy books are written, and which protected the message from the curious head waiter's eyes:

DEAR MR. SIMIS:

There is a sale of incubators at the city mart to-morrow. Good luck and bargains.

Faithfully,

HATTIE POLSKY.

"Well"—and a heavenly smile overspread Moe's face—"she didn't throw me down after all! Come on, Sam, let's get this here ranch a going, and then we'll go pay that call. I betcha the first incubator we buy against a glass egg that we marry into that antiquer family yet!"

FAR-AWAY HILLS ARE GREEN

EVERY lass her lad has won—

I must be choosing now, they say;
But choice from out my power has gone
Within an hour, within a day.

Colin, he goes in broadcloth clad,
Jock tills his fields with honest care;
The old folks think with either lad
I would have gold and gear to spare.

But to my father's door there came
A fiddler with his viol and bow,
A light-foot lad with lips of flame,
And my heart broke to see him go!

He played, "Hills far away are green—"
His black eyes beckoned, "Come wi' me!"
I dreamed of lands I'd never seen
And of a home I'd never see.

His light feet tread the way they list,
But still I hear the song he plays,
And dreams of a love that I have missed
Go with me all my days.

Edna Valentine Trapnell

The Wild Fawn*

A WIFE WHO BROUGHT GAY PARIS TO QUIET DIXIE LAND

By Mary Imlay Taylor

Author of "Who Pays?" "Children of Passion," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. L. LAMBDIN

THE news that their son William is bringing a bride home from France is a shock to Mr. and Mrs. Carter, who, with two other sons and a daughter, live in an old-fashioned Southern town. Their lame son, Daniel, is especially perturbed, because he knows that William was engaged to a town girl, Virginia Denbigh.

William and his bride, Fanchon, arrive. Fanchon proves to be a charming young French girl who wears daring gowns, speaks English with a delightful accent, and shocks the whole community with her cigarette-smoking and general disregard of Southern conventions.

Invited by Virginia Denbigh, who is too proud to exhibit her hurt, to sing at a church concert, Fanchon, after a disturbing interview with a sinister-looking stranger named Corwin, whom she had evidently known in the past, not only sings, but actually dances in the church in a manner that almost stupefied her ultraconservative audience. A motion-picture magnate named Bernstein thereupon offers her a lucrative contract, which her husband indignantly refuses to consider.

William Carter, weakening under the criticism directed at his wife, goes to his first love, Virginia Denbigh, for sympathy, and gets very little of it. He learns with a shock that his brother Daniel has helped the Denbighs to save their beautiful old home from the hands of creditors, and has thereby earned Virginia's heartfelt gratitude.

Meanwhile Fanchon is growing more and more bitter toward all the Carter family except the boy and girl, Leigh and Emily.

"You're awfully good people," she says bitterly to Daniel. "*Mon Dieu*, I'd rather meet some bad ones—who'd let me alone!"

XI

FANCHON did not go up-stairs. She flung herself face downward on the lounge in the library and writhed there, beating the old silk cushions with her small, furious fists. In the bitterness of her heart she thought she hated them all, every Carter who was ever born! Because she was so angry, so wilfully hurt, she had wreaked her vengeance upon Daniel. She had told him a falsehood, and now, thinking of it, she tore at the cushions and wept hot tears.

She had no idea why she had done it. She hated Virginia Denbigh, because she knew the Carters loved Virginia. They had wanted William to marry her, and she believed they were making William hate his wife. She believed it from the bottom of her soul. But why had she struck at Daniel?

Perhaps it was because he was William's

brother; perhaps it was because Fanchon had divined that he loved Virginia.

Virginia, with her calm, lovely face, had become a nightmare to Fanchon. She quarreled with her husband, and she goaded and teased him, because the Carters did not like her, because their attitude was so superior. Then she laid it all to Virginia!

Fanchon had done nothing lately but quarrel with William. He had objected to Corwin, had forbidden her to have him at the house. Fanchon, who feared Corwin, might have rejoiced had she not resented her husband's tone. He had been set on, she thought, by Mr. Carter.

Since that fatal dance Mr. Carter had been coldly civil. He hadn't considered it his duty to scold his daughter-in-law, but he snubbed her. Fanchon, carrying her head high, had nevertheless been cut to the heart by it. She loved admiration, she loved applause, she lived on excitement, and she had none of these things, unless she counted

* Copyright, 1919, by Mary Imlay Taylor—This story began in the September number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

the admiration of Leigh and Emily—two children, as she thought scornfully, who didn't know any better!

As she lay there on the old lounge, strange, ancestral passions stirred in her, wild impulses of rage and melancholy. She had had a bitter time. The very place was

whites of her eyes when she looked at her, as if she was watching something strange and outlandish.

"I might be a Fiji Islander, from the way they look at me!" Fanchon sobbed angrily, staring about the old room with its familiar, guttered armchairs, its littered



AS SHE LAY THERE ON THE OLD LOUNGE, STRANGE, ANCESTRAL PASSIONS STIRRED IN HER, WILD IMPULSES OF RAGE AND MELANCHOLY

intolerable; she hated it, and she knew that the place hated her. The stodgy, monotonous domestic life—she had to face that, too—three meals a day with the Carters!

If they had liked her, if they had even made her welcome and forgiven her unconventional ways, it might have been different, she thought; but now she hated them. She knew that Mrs. Carter had seen her in the church lane with Corwin. Mrs. Carter had no idea of the quarrel she had with Corwin, or her fear of him, but she must think ill of her and run home to tattle about it!

Fanchon sat on the old lounge and dashed hot tears from her eyes. She pictured herself sitting at the luncheon-table with the family. She could see them! Mr. Carter and William would not be at home; but there would be Leigh, making moon eyes, a sentimental boy, and Emily with her white eyelashes and her honest, snub-nosed face, and Mrs. Carter, her fair hair fading in ugly streaks, and her absence of eyebrows. Daniel, too, his dark, handsome head bent and his eyes indifferent—he had never liked her! Even Miranda, moving around clumsily with the dishes, would show the

library-table—where Mr. Carter's pipe lay beside his accustomed place—and at the dull, ancestral Carter over the mantelpiece.

The portrait filled the latest Carter bride with a kind of fury. She rose from the lounge and went and stared at it.

"Ugly old thing!" she cried angrily. "You'd hate me, if you could!"

She felt a sudden sensation of suffocation. The place was too small for her; she couldn't breathe in it. She went to the window and leaned out, staring blankly at the peaceful scene. The Carter house was well on the outskirts of the town, and she could glimpse a distant meadow where a spotted cow moved placidly. A few red chickens crossed her vision, picking in the grass. A colored maid in the next house was pinning some clothes on the line. Down the quiet street an ice-cart trundled its sober, dripping way. It was quiet again when the sound of wheels receded; then suddenly a rooster crowed. He crowed tremendously in a fine, deep bass.

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried Fanchon.

She drew back from the intolerable prospect, and heard Miranda setting the table

for luncheon. The faint jingle of glasses and the occasional rattle of china warned her. The domestic meal was approaching with its unfailing regularity. She could not bear it. She ran out of the room, and had one foot already on the lowest step of the stairs, when the door opened and Leigh came in.

"Fanchon!" he cried eagerly, his boyish face flushing to the hair.

An imp of perversity stopped her. She stood balanced, one hand on the banisters, looking back over her shoulder. There was at least one Carter she could manage, and she knew it. Those fawn eyes softened and glowed.

"Leigh!" she responded softly. "*Mon brave garçon!*"

He put his books down and came toward her with shining eyes.

"Oh, Fanchon, what mites of feet you've got!" he exclaimed, looking at the foot that she was displaying on the step. "I never saw a foot as small as that."

She smiled.

"You think so, *chéri?*"

She moved the small foot a bit, looking down at it, pensive, aware that he could see also the charming sweep of those dark lashes. Leigh, long since subjugated, dropped on one knee beside the lowest step.

"If I were a prince, I'd follow that shoe," he laughed up at her, his boyish eyes adoring. "I've read some French about a lady's feet—in a novel. It fits your feet, Fanchon." He blushed. "I'm not sure I pronounce very well, but it was this: '*Petits pieds si adorés!*'"

For a moment her lips trembled, half mirthful, half tearful. She leaned toward him and stroked his hair caressingly, her light, soft fingers thrilling him.

"*Je t'adore, mon Leigh!*" she whispered.

Then she laughed elfishly, put one of her slender fingers on her lip and ran up-stairs like a whirlwind.

Leigh slipped out of her mind in an instant. She did not even see the adoring look that followed her. She was bent on escaping that stodgy family meal, and she was in hot haste. She had thought of a way to evade it—to evade them all for a while.

She was fond of riding on horseback, and William had taken her out on several occasions. He would have taken her more frequently if her modish habit had not shocked the sobriety of the old-fashioned town. It

had been made in Paris, and it had startled the streets through which they rode. After one or two experiences William had quietly let the rides drop. Fanchon knew why he had done so, and it made her angry. To-day she thought of it again, and she longed for the fresh air in her face and the swift gallop. Even the stupid country roads were tolerable for the sake of that.

She went to her closet and dragged out the famous breeches and riding-coat. She was putting on the stylish leggings when Miranda knocked.

"Please, ma'am, Miz Carter, she say ain't you-all comin' down t' luncheon? De chops is gettin' cold."

"I don't want any luncheon," Fanchon called to her without opening the door. "Say that I've got a headache."

She heard Miranda retreating heavily; then she slipped on her riding-habit, found her hat, and, opening the door softly, stole down-stairs. She could hear Mrs. Carter talking to Daniel in a hesitating voice, and she heard Leigh answer something. She did not want them to talk to her. She could not bear it. She opened the door gently, slipped out, and started almost at a run for the livery-stable where she knew William had hired the horses.

Mr. Carter had lunched down-town. He did so when he was very busy, and he was on his way back to his office when he encountered Judge Jessup. The judge halted him and shook hands.

"Dan's won the case!" he said with elation. "Why weren't you in court to hear your son plead, Carter?"

Mr. Carter reddened a little. He had been thinking of William and William's wife, and this was a keen relief. He relaxed.

"I was busy. How did the boy get on, judge?"

The judge clapped his big hand on his old friend's shoulder.

"Carter, he's going to be a great lawyer! I'm as proud of him as if I'd hatched him myself."

"Poor Dan!" Mr. Carter's face softened while his eyes smiled. "He ought to have something to make up—I hate to see him so lame!"

"Nonsense! It doesn't hurt his brains, man!" Jessup exclaimed hotly. "He only limps a little. He's the smartest boy you have, Carter."

Mr. Carter smiled broadly.

"Think so? I wouldn't like to say that."

William's done well, Payson tells me; he said so a month or two ago. They're all pleased with the way he handled things abroad."

"Eh?" the judge cocked a humorous eyebrow. "I thought the most William did over there was—to get married!"

Mr. Carter met his eye, faltered, and groaned. The judge laughed.

"You don't appreciate Dan. Now, as I was saying—"

He stopped with his mouth open. A horse came down the main street at a hard gallop. There was a distinct sensation. The drivers of passing vehicles sat sidewise; a string of little half-dressed piccaninnies streamed along the edge of the sidewalk in eager but hopeless pursuit. A street-car that had stopped at the crossing failed to go on because conductor and motorman were gaping after the vision.

Riding cross-saddle, in the latest extreme of fashion, was young Mrs. William Carter. The apparition would have startled them at any time, but the lady was already famous, and her progress might be viewed somewhat in the light of a Roman triumph.

Very pale, her dark eyes shining and her lips compressed, Fanchon struck her steed sharply with her riding-crop. The horse, a spirited young bay, came on at a gallop, with the clatter of maddened hoofs, followed by the stream of pursuing children and their wild shouts of applause. In this fashion Fanchon dashed past Judge Jessup and Mr. Carter and disappeared in a cloud of dust on the highroad.

A comet could scarcely have had a more startling effect. Mr. Carter said nothing, but his color became apoplectic. He stared after her for a minute, and then, with a set face, he turned to the judge.

"What were you saying? Oh, I remember—yes, yes, I'll come in to-morrow and hear Dan address the jury," he said hastily.

The judge smiled grimly.

"The verdict was reached to-day, Johnson. You're a bit behindhand." As he spoke he held out his hand. "Congratulations on Dan," he said heartily. "I'm in a hurry. Want to walk back to my office with me?"

"No!" said Mr. Carter.

He knew what Jessup thought, he suspected him of shaking with suppressed laughter, but the judge looked innocent enough. They shook hands again absently, having forgotten that they had done so

twice already, and Mr. Carter strode away. He knew that he was stared at, and he walked fast, his face still deeply red. At the door of his office—he was in the insurance business—he found his office-boy gaping down the street.

Mr. Carter stopped short.

"Here, you! Go into that office!" he said sharply. "What are you doing out there, you young ninny? You'll be picked up for a street-corner loafer if you don't mind your own business better!"

The alarmed youth retreated before him, apologizing. Mr. Carter, with his hat still on, strode past the clerks in the outer office, went into his own room, and slammed the door with such force that the glass rattled.

One of the young stenographers looked up from her work and laughed silently at the other.

"Seen his daughter-in-law?" she inquired in a whisper.

The other girl nodded.

"She's awfully pretty and swell, anyway," she murmured. "Oh, my—Minnie, look!"

Across the street was the old road-house where William and his wife had supped after the dance. As Mr. Carter's stenographer looked out now she saw a hastily saddled horse led to the door. A tall man came out and swung himself into the saddle. It was Corwin.

The two girls across the street rose silently and leaned over their machines to watch him. He rode well, turning his horse around, starting at a quick trot, and breaking almost at once into a gallop.

"He's gone after her, Minnie!"

Minnie nodded; then, hearing a noise in the inner room, they dropped into their places and worked furiously. Mr. Carter opened the door, looked in, and closed it sharply again. They heard him return to his desk.

Minnie pulled her companion's sleeve.

"He saw him!" she whispered.

The other girl assented, touching her lips with her finger. They could hear earthquake-like sounds within, and they rattled away at their typewriters, demurely silent; but through the open window they could see, far in the distance, the furious horseman disappearing down the turnpike.

His horse was a powerful animal, a far better traveler than the young bay that had carried Fanchon. The two girls in the office speculated in silence, and worked

rapturously. Young Mrs. Carter was the most exciting thing in a dull town at a dull time of the year, and they were grateful to her.

Mr. Carter kept them late that day and worked them hard. Usually an easy taskmaster, he called them in during the afternoon and gave them page after page of dictation. It was half past six when he slammed down the top of his desk, locked it, and went home.

He walked, and it was a long way. It was seven o'clock when he opened the front door with his latch-key.

The family were already at dinner—all but William, who was walking up and down the hall, looking haggard. Mr. Carter came in and hung his hat upon the rack.

"Waiting for any one?" he asked his son dryly.

William raised his head.

"Yes, Fanchon. She hasn't come in yet. I'm expecting her any moment."

"You needn't," his father retorted grimly. "She's out riding with that fellow—Caraffi's manager."

William said nothing, but he stopped short. Mr. Carter, after eying him for an instant, went on into the dining-room. His wife, Daniel, Emily, and Leigh were sitting around the table, eating the second course disconsolately.

"I thought you'd never come—and we were hungry," Mrs. Carter said apologetically. "Miranda, go and get the soup for Mr. Carter. I had it kept hot," she added, glancing anxiously toward the hall door.

They could hear William walking to and fro again. As Miranda disappeared for the soup, Mr. Carter looked up. He glanced at his wife meaningly.

"She's out riding with that man," he said in an undertone.

"Johnson!"

His wife's dismay only brought a grim smile to Carter's face. He unfolded his napkin without further comment. Before Miranda returned with the soup-tureen, Mrs. Carter rallied sufficiently to lean over and murmur across the table:

"I've got a lot to tell you—that dreadful girl was with that man this morning—behind the Methodist Church! I saw—"

She stopped, for Leigh had risen suddenly. He flung his napkin on the table and stalked out of the room with a white face. Mr. Carter stared after him.

"What the—" he began.

Emily touched his hand warningly. Miranda was returning.

"Leigh's awfully mashed on Fanchon," Emily whispered irrelevantly, returning to her dinner.

Mr. Carter shut his mouth hard, and the conversation languished. Daniel spoke once about the weather, and his father nodded.

"Judge Jessup handed out a lot of compliments for you to-day, Dan," he remembered suddenly.

Mrs. Carter looked pleased, but even this fell flat. They could hear William's tramp continuing after Leigh went up-stairs. Mr. Carter rose once and went to the door.

"Aren't you coming in to eat your dinner, William?" he demanded.

"I've dined," William replied shortly.

"Then I think you'd better go into the library and sit down," said his father meaningly.

William, halting in his walk, stared for a moment, puzzled. Then he understood, and a deep red went up to his forehead. Without a word, he turned, went into the library, and shut the door.

Miranda had brought on the dessert, but only Emily and Daniel ate it. There was a heavy silence. Mr. Carter sat moodily, apparently listening, and Mrs. Carter could think of nothing to say. She tried two or three times and stopped, aghast at her own temerity. The three vacant chairs—William's, Fanchon's, and Leigh's—seemed to gape at them. Daniel finally rose.

"I've got to prepare a paper for Judge Jessup," he remarked quietly, and left the room.

They heard him light his cigar and go up-stairs. It was then that Mr. Carter rose also and went as usual into the library. Emily and her mother, left alone, gaped at each other in a startled way. They heard voices in the library, and then a heavy silence, filled with the odor of tobacco. Emily began to be a little frightened.

"Mama, do you suppose she's run away?" she whispered in an awed tone.

Mrs. Carter cast a frightened look toward Miranda's retreating figure, and shook her head.

"I don't know, Emily. Suppose we go and sit in the parlor? I don't think papa wants us in the library."

They spent the evening sitting in the little unused parlor that Fanchon hated. It was full of heavy stuffed furniture and old-fashioned cabinets. Accustomed to a family

gathering in the library, they languished there, watching the clock.

"It's getting awfully late," said Emily finally, after an interminable hour. "Where can she be?"

"Emily," said Mrs. Carter irrelevantly, "I wish you wouldn't say that Leigh is 'mashed' on her. In the first place it's absurd, and in the second it's vulgar."

"But he is," insisted Emily. "He'd get down in the mud and let her walk on him—like Sir Walter Raleigh's cloak. He says so."

"Nonsense!" Mrs. Carter, trembling with nervousness, discovered that it was half past ten. "You go to bed," she ordered shortly.

After her daughter went up-stairs, she sat for a long time, waiting. She was puzzled by the silence in the library. From time to time she went to the window and looked out anxiously; yet she had no real hope that her daughter-in-law would appear. She felt sure that Fanchon had run away, and the disgrace of it made her face burn. She turned the gas down and sat in semidarkness, ashamed to look at her own image in the long mirror between the window.

The Carters had always had such good wives, such loyal, faithful women. She had not failed herself, she had done her best, and William, her first-born, the pride of her heart—must he be disgraced?

She sat there watching and listening until nearly twelve o'clock. Still she heard occasional sounds from the library. Finally, worn out, she crept up-stairs to her room; but even there she continued to listen and tremble at intervals.

At last she heard the sounds of locking up the house and her husband's heavy step on the stairs.

Mr. Carter came into the room and slammed the door. His wife had crept hastily into bed, and she lay there, shivering a little with dread.

"What did you say to him, papa?"

"Say? Not a blamed word!" Mr. Carter sat down and pulled off his boots, flinging one down with violence. "I guess I don't have to say anything," he remarked grimly. "I reckon the fool's got about enough. Marrying a French ballet-dancer!"

Mrs. Carter drew a long breath.

"Where do you s'pose she is, Johnson?"

"How do I know? He'll have to get a divorce—that's as plain as the nose on your face. Then I suppose the donkey 'll want to marry Rosamond Silvertree, or Bloomie Bloomingkitten, or some other actress."

"Oh, hush!" groaned Mrs. Carter, burying her head in her pillow with a sob. "I can't bear it! Poor Willie!"

Mr. Carter restrained his tongue, but he flung the other boot into the corner with a bang more eloquent than words.

XII

Down in the library William Carter waited alone. He was glad to be alone. Aware of his father's attitude, he had dragged through a fearful evening. Mr. Carter had sat at the table, smoking and reading his newspaper. He had said nothing about the one subject that was uppermost in both minds; but at intervals he had lowered his paper sufficiently to fix a fierce eye on the clock and then to turn it significantly upon his son. Without meeting his glance, William felt it. With the tide of rage and grief rising in his own heart, that hostile eye—which seemed to say, "I told you so!" was intolerable.

He was thankful when his father's stout figure disappeared into the front part of the house. He heard the vigorous locking-up without protest. It was evident that Mr. Carter had decided that Fanchon wouldn't return that night, and he was bound to lock up as usual. In fact, he did it a little more violently than usual. It was an overt act which relieved his feelings. Then, carrying a pitcher of iced water, he went heavily up-stairs, and his son heard the sharp closing of his bedroom door.

It took no very vigorous imagination, either, to fancy his mother's anxious inquiry for the truant, and the subsequent comment on the situation. Even in the solitude of the library William's face burned. He was bewildered, too. He knew that he had reached a crisis, and he did not know how to deal with it. To do anything seemed only to publish his own misery. He had telephoned twice to the livery-stable already, and been assured that Mrs. Carter's horse was still out.

He had no idea where she had gone, and to follow, even in a motor, would be senseless enough. It was a fine night; a full moon lighted the roads. If she meant to return, she could get home so easily that he could not believe she intended to do so.

As for Corwin, William had only seen the man two or three times, and was cognizant of the gossip only through his father. People didn't talk to him.

His father had seen Corwin follow

Fanchon, but had Fanchon planned it all? Or had the man—a hard, coarse-looking brute—pursued her without any invitation, without her consent? William Carter did not know; he only felt a blind rage that he had suddenly been forced to doubt his wife. It was hideous—simply hideous!

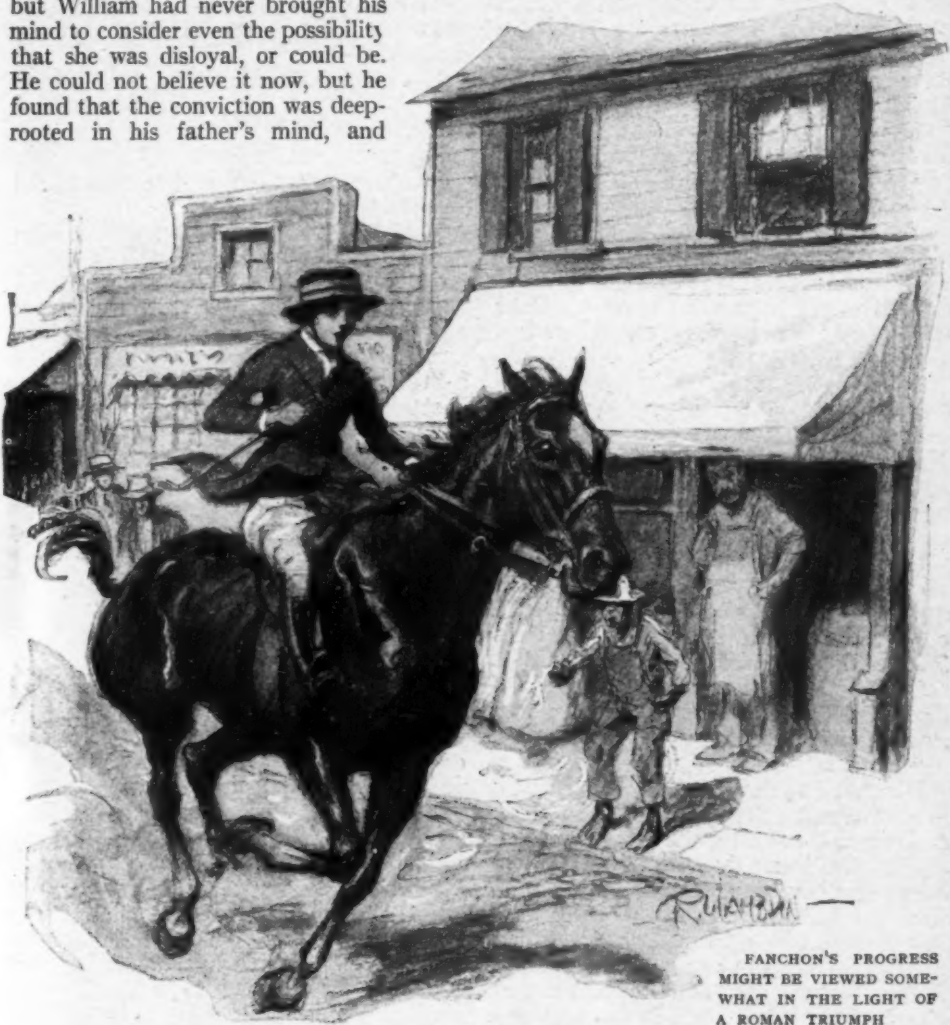


A COMET COULD SCARCELY HAVE HAD A MORE STARTLING EFFECT. MR. CARTER SAID NOTHING, BUT HIS COLOR BECAME APOPLECTIC

They had been quarreling lately nearly all the time—petty quarrels. Fanchon evidently hated the place, she seemed to hate even her husband's people, and he had found her becoming wilder and stranger every day. He knew she longed to go back to Paris, or at least to New York; but William had never brought his mind to consider even the possibility that she was disloyal, or could be. He could not believe it now, but he found that the conviction was deep-rooted in his father's mind, and

He watched the clock until the hands indicated midnight. Where could she be? He walked the floor again.

Unobserved, he could give way to his agony of mind. Had there been an accident? Had Fanchon been hurt?



FANCHON'S PROGRESS
MIGHT BE VIEWED SOME-
WHAT IN THE LIGHT OF
A ROMAN TRIUMPH

he saw it in his mother's kind, worried eyes.

What had they heard? He did not know—at least he was sure he did not know it all. He saw something of it in Leigh's white face to-night. The boy was fond of Fanchon. William felt relief to think that at least one member of his family liked her.

The suspense was fast becoming a deep and keen agony. He was shaken. He knew that his thoughts had wandered to Virginia, to the peace he might have had. Had Fanchon seen it? Was she tormenting him in a wild fit of jealousy, or—intolerable and monstrous thought!—his wife in flight with a man who looked to him to be no more than a common gamester?

How still it was! Through the open window the soft night air poured in; and now it had a difference, a perceptible quickening, the keenness of the morning. It was nearly one o'clock.

He flung himself into a chair and waited, burying his head in his hands. He tried to think coherently, but he could not. Then a thrill ran through him as the telephone-bell rang at his elbow. He snatched up the receiver. A man's voice called for Mr. William Carter—a gruff, half-drowsy negro voice.

"Yes, yes! What is it?" he questioned.

"De boss tol' me to watch out fo' dat horse Miz Carter hired, suh. I's been up all night—dat horse jes' come in dis minute. He's drippin', an' he ain't got no rider, suh."

William dropped the receiver and stood motionless, as if turned to stone. Good God, how he had wronged her! There had been an accident!

A vision of Fanchon lying by the wayside, her lovely face cold in the moonlight, her helpless, pretty, idle hands flung out, pierced his heart. He groaned aloud. Then his sickened brain cleared and he roused himself. He must get help, hire a motor, and go out to search.

He raised his head sharply. His strained ear caught a sound at the front door. He crossed the room almost at a stride, switched on the light in the hall, threw back his father's elaborate chains and bolts with a shaking hand, and flung the door open. On the threshold, deadly pale and dripping wet, stood his wife.

"Fanchon!"

His first impulse of wild relief was lost in another and a stronger feeling. The look on her face checked the words on his lips.

She came in slowly, reluctantly, putting out a small, groping hand. As the light from the hall lamp fell full upon her, he saw that she had lost her hat, and that her pretty hair clung in wet curls to her forehead. All the gaiety and frivolity of that Parisian habit was gone. It was torn and muddy and wet. But she did not go to him, she did not exclaim that she had been hurt and half drowned. She walked past him, a little unsteadily, and went into the library.

William shut the door and followed her. She had dropped into a chair and lay there, half reclining, her arm across the back and her face hidden on it. Her husband stood looking down at her in silence for a mo-

ment; then he turned without a word and went into the dining-room, poured some brandy into a glass, and brought it.

"Drink this!" he said peremptorily.

She lifted the glass slowly, and, without raising her eyes, tasted the liquor and then thrust it aside.

"I know what you think!" she said in a low voice. "It isn't true—I've done nothing—nothing at all!"

His face hardened.

"Why do you say that, Fanchon? I haven't accused you."

She turned with a gesture of impatience.

"I know they have—your father and your mother!"

William, who had taken the glass from her, set it down on the table.

"You're wet through," he said coldly.

"Go up-stairs and change. You can talk afterward—if you want to."

"I don't care if I'm wet!" she answered a little wildly. "I'd rather bear wet than your face!"

"I'm sorry my face is so unbearable. I had no thought when I saw you but anxiety. There's been an accident. You haven't even told me whether you're hurt!"

"It wasn't an accident," said Fanchon.

"The horse got down in the stream and wallowed. I had to get off to save myself, and when he came out he ran off."

William lifted his eyes reluctantly to hers.

"That horse has just come in, Fanchon. I got a telephone as you came up the porch steps."

She did not seem to grasp the significance of this. She put up a wandering hand and pushed back her damp hair.

"I can't help it!" she said sharply. "It's so—I never would have got here but for a motor. Some people—perfect strangers, too—were coming this way, and they brought me. We came faster than any horse could go."

"Where were you? Where did the horse roll?"

"At Fanshawe's Creek—you know, halfway to the Mountain Inn."

William turned abruptly and walked across the room and back again.

"That wouldn't take an hour and a half for a horse," he remarked dryly. "It's one o'clock, Fanchon."

A flame of red shot up in her white cheeks.

"I think he got into the water at about eleven o'clock. I tried to make him ford

the stream, and he—he just got down and wallowed in the water. I had to get off.”

“You went out just after luncheon—while mother was at lunch, in fact—and you were coming home on those lonely roads at eleven o’clock at night, alone?”

She sat up in her chair at that, her flushed face turned fully toward him, and something like a flame kindling in her fawn-like eyes.

“Of course your mother told you!”

“Told me what?”

“About my talk with Corwin in the lane.”

William stared at her.

“My mother told me nothing. I didn’t mean to tell you, I didn’t mean to say anything,” he added grimly; “but since you’ve said so much, I will. I heard from father that Corwin followed you out on the turnpike to-day—to the edification of the town! Was he with you at the creek?”

Fanchon sat quite still, looking at him, her large eyes seeming to grow larger and darker in her white face. He returned the look as steadily, not in anger, but with a kind of grimness new in her experience with him. Neither of them moved, and the stillness in the room was so deep that they both heard the familiar sounds outside. The church clock struck in the distance, and some cocks crowed. The fresh breeze stirred the curtains in the window while the shaded lamp on the table flared up with the little gust. In the flare William saw the misery on his wife’s face.

“Fanchon, that man’s pursuing you—he’s a villain! What has happened? Tell me—I have a right to know!”

Something in his changed tone touched her. She sank back in her chair, covering her face with her hands.

“*Mon Dieu!*” she murmured brokenly, and then, as her emotions swept her away, she burst into wild and uncontrollable weeping, her sobs shaking her from head to foot.

Something in the passion of her tears, and in the crumpled helplessness of the small figure in the chair, touched William in his turn. He stood looking at her without moving, thinking unhappily. He had made a mess of it; but after all it wasn’t all her fault. It was his, and he still loved her. From what he had suffered to-night he knew that he loved her. Suddenly he bent over the small, writhing figure and spoke.

“Tell me, Fanchon,” he said hoarsely. “Must I thrash that villain?”

Very slowly she raised her head, very slowly and reluctantly she raised her tear-drenched eyes to his.

“I—I didn’t go with him, I didn’t want to see him—he followed me.” She hesitated, trembling. “I don’t know how to tell you. He overtook me and he made me come back. I’d lost my way. He made me go back to the inn—we ate dinner together.”

“You dined at a public road-house with that man—a man I wouldn’t ask to my father’s house?”

She nodded, biting her lips.

For a moment he was hot with rage; but he curbed it. He wanted to be just, and he was deeply moved. As she sat there she looked as she had looked once in Paris, when he had first seen her—a butterfly of a creature fighting to live, fighting hopelessly in the midst of glittering, sordid surroundings. He hadn’t been blinded, his eyes had been wide open, but he had fallen in love with her; and he had been moved, too, by compassion. He had snatched her out of that gay, hollow sham of a life, and he had meant to save her, to keep her safe. Yet, as she sat there now, she looked forlorn and helpless and beset.

“Fanchon,” he said gravely and gently, “tell me why you did this. You didn’t mean to do it, you didn’t set out to do it—why did you? See, I trust you—I’m asking you to tell me the truth.”

“I lost my way.” She repeated it as if she had a lesson by rote. “Corwin overtook me and made me turn back. I was hungry, and we ate dinner at the same table—in the public dining-room. Then—then I didn’t want him to ride back with me—and I went out of the side door and started alone. When I came to the crossing above Fanshawe’s Creek, I didn’t know which way to go, and I chose the wrong road. I rode so far that I got frightened. I asked at a house out there—a woman with a queer name—Quantah, I think. I had to come back to the crossing. Then, when I did get to the creek, the horse lay down in the water. I sat and waited, dripping, until a motor picked me up. That’s all.”

“No,” said William, “that’s not all. You’re afraid of that man, Fanchon!”

“I!” she laughed tremulously. “Why do you think that?”

He was watching her, and he saw her eyes change. He was right. She was afraid of Corwin.

"I don't think it," he said gravely. "I know it. Go on, Fanchon; tell me the rest."

"I have nothing to tell," she replied slowly, deliberately, but with shaking lips. "You—you don't believe me, *n'est-ce-pas?*"

William, looking steadily into her face, made no reply. His changed, white face frightened her. She rose unsteadily to her feet, a forlorn little figure.

"I'm not afraid of Corwin," she

hand, and tried to catch at his, but he moved away.

"Go up-stairs," he said gravely, without anger, in the remote tone of a man who no longer cared. "You're worn out; you'll



"SHE STILL LOVES
WILLIAM," DANIEL
THOUGHT BITTERLY

said angrily, "not a bit! *Ciel*, why should I be afraid of any one? I ask you that, *mon ami!*"

He still said nothing, his grave eyes on hers. Fanchon returned his look—tried to return it steadily. She had told him a falsehood. She had never been afraid of falsehood; it was an easy way of escape. But now, under his eyes, she flinched. She blushed scarlet, put out a wavering little

take cold. I told you so before. Go up-stairs to bed. Shall I rouse Miranda? Do you need help?"

"Help?" she shivered, but not with cold. "Non, non! No help for me—here!"

As she spoke she turned, lifted the discarded glass of brandy to her lips, and drained it. Then, without looking at him again, she left the room.

The light was still on in the hall, but she felt her way to the stairs blindly. She was crying. She had not intended to lie to him, but it was so much easier than to tell the truth. She clung to the banisters for a

moment, sobbing bitterly; then, dashing the tears from her eyes, she went on, aware that he was still standing motionless where she had left him.

As she dragged herself to the head of the stairs, she was suddenly aware of a figure in the upper hall. She stopped and looked around in a panic. She expected her father-in-law, but it was only Leigh.

"Are you safe?" he asked eagerly. "There's been an accident—I knew it! You've been hurt, Fanchon?"

She looked at him in surprise.

"Where were you, Leigh?"

"I've been up all night. I knew William was, too, and I've waited."

He was eighteen, but he looked younger, and his boyish face was white with anxiety. With a sudden impulse, Fanchon laid her hands on his shoulders.

"I'm safe—quite safe, dear boy!" she whispered, and, lifting her pale, beautiful face to his, she kissed him lightly on both cheeks. "Dear Leigh—dear brother!" she murmured. "I shall love you—*toujours*!"

Leigh, unused to being kissed, turned from white to red, but he felt as if he had received an accolade.

XIII

THE only member of the Carter family who left the house with a cheerful face on the following morning was Daniel. There had been practically nothing said at breakfast. Fanchon kept to her room, William briefly explaining the accident at the creek and adding that his wife had a chill. Mrs. Carter went up to see her, but was refused admittance. So was Emily. Mr. Carter read the newspaper more thoroughly than usual, and Leigh ate in a dream.

Daniel, aware of the strained atmosphere, found difficulty in suppressing a smile. He had encountered, at intervals, the expressive whites of Miranda's eyes. She had carried up Fanchon's breakfast, and she knew Job Wills, the hostler at the livery-stable, who had come by in the morning, on his way home after an all-night shift. What Miranda did not know about Mrs. William Carter's ride wasn't worth knowing. Her eyes nearly upset Daniel's gravity; but he finally left the house, feeling a little guilty. It was wrong to find amusement in an incident that seemed so tragic to the others. Daniel therefore suppressed the twinkle in his eyes and set out for Judge Jessup's office.

His way lay through the church lane and

down to the lower corner of the main street. It was a way that, at this season of the year, was full of blossoming. It was past time now for the early flowers, but an old-fashioned clustering yellow rose climbed over the Paysons' fence and tossed its fragrance and its falling petals to the passers-by like the confetti at a carnival. A scarlet-hooded woodpecker was climbing the tall trunk of the old oak by the churchyard gate.

Daniel walked slowly. Rapid motion increased his limp, but when he moved in his usual leisurely way his step only halted a little. He was no longer thinking of his own family, nor of the whites of Miranda's eyes. His mind had reverted, as it usually did, to Virginia Denbigh.

He was not startled, therefore, when he saw her standing at the corner of the church. She was not wearing her big hat to-day, but an odd little bonnet-shaped affair that showed her pretty hair and her white forehead, and she was dressed in pink. He thought it was the most lovely shade of pink he had ever seen.

She smiled as she saw him coming.

"I was waiting for you, Dan."

He flushed, and his eyes shone.

"I like that bonnet, Virginia. At first I thought I couldn't like anything but the big hat, but this shows your hair. It's like sunshine to-day."

She laughed.

"My hat was a thousand years old! This is brand-new—I trimmed it."

"I wish I could do anything so well," he said in a tone of real regret. "I couldn't."

"Not even a speech to the jury?"

She laughed a little tremulously. Something in Daniel always touched her. She supposed it was his accident.

"Any one can address a jury," he replied, "but no one but you could trim that bonnet, Virginia."

"If you praise it so much, I shall never take it off." She laughed again, but her eyes grew very grave and kind. "Dan, I heard you speak in court yesterday."

He was startled.

"Really? Where were you, Virginia?"

"Oh, way back! I was passing the court-house, and I heard two colored men speak about it. One said: 'Dan Carter, he's makin' a great speech, yessuh, he sho' is. 'Pears like he's got dat jury all bemuzzled!'" Virginia laughed delightedly. "I went in after that. It was so crowded

I thought I'd have to stand, but Mr. Payson was there near the door, and he made some one bring a chair. I could just see the back of your head, Dan, but I heard."

His face glowed now.

"How strange!" he exclaimed in a low voice. "I knew you were there. No, I didn't see you, Virginia. I was speaking, and suddenly—well, I felt that you were there. I remember I half looked around. I thought you'd smiled at me."

She gave him a quick, startled look—a look that seemed to express some new perception of him; but his eyes were averted. He was smiling absently, as if talking to himself.

"I didn't smile, Dan," she said softly. "I was too deeply touched. I don't know why we all felt that way, but we did. Yet when I took your speech to pieces in my mind I found how simple it was. You just told us that man's story, but you told it so simply it went straight to our hearts."

He smiled.

"That's all I can do, Virginia. I'm a simple fellow—I can only tell the simple truth. There's no cause for all this—this fanfare of trumpets in the newspapers, I mean—about my speech. Anybody could do it."

She shook her head.

"Nobody else could do it. That's just it. You're like Lincoln, Dan. They say he thought nothing of the Gettysburg address. I believe he wrote it on his way there. I wish you'd tell me when you're going to speak again. I want to be there; I want to hear you 'bemuzzle' the jury again."

His eyes lit up.

"Will you come? Really?"

"Every time—if you'll tell me. You can phone me, Dan."

He drew a long breath.

"I shall make great speeches, sure enough, if you're there! I couldn't help it. Only I wish you'd sit where I can see you—will you, Virginia?"

She laughed.

"In which hat, Dan?"

He considered a moment.

"The old one, please! When I have dreams about you I see you in that hat."

"I'm afraid it's given you nightmare! I didn't know it was as bad as that!"

She laughed again, a little tremulously. Suddenly she began to see what she had never quite seen before. Poor Daniel cared for her! She was afraid that he cared more

than she had dreamed. It touched her so much that her eyes misted.

"Nightmare? Not a bit of it. I tell you what to do, Virginia—when you're through with it let me have it. I'll hang it up over my desk when I want an inspiration. A poor lawyer needs an inspiration. The law's as dry as dust."

She lifted her eyes reluctantly but smilingly to his. She had almost been afraid to meet them, but she was not now. Dan's look was just the same look he had always given her—and she had never understood!

"I'll give it to you for a waste-paper basket," she said gaily.

Then she stopped, her hand on the stone gate-post of the old church. They had been walking slowly through the lane, and Daniel halted, surprised.

"Going in here, Virginia?"

She smiled.

"Yes. There's to be a Sunday-school festival. Besides, they've just cleaned up the church. I took all our prayer-books away for the refurbishing; now I'm going to put them back in the pew."

As she spoke, he glanced down at the armful of books she held. He had been to church with the Denbighs more than once, and he remembered the colonel's big prayer-book and hymnal and the books for their guests. He had used that old red one himself. Then his eye fell upon two smaller ones of brown morocco with Virginia's monogram on the clasp of the case.

"You're still carrying your old set, Virginia," he remarked thoughtfully. Here was a chance for a gift, perhaps. "They're worn at the edges."

She looked down, blushing suddenly.

"Are they? I hadn't noticed."

Something in her tone made Daniel take the books from the pile on her arm. It was a set, prayer-book and hymnal bound in one and prettily mounted. He slipped the clasp and opened them. A faded pansy slipped between the pages. He clasped it hastily and handed it back.

"I thought I knew them," he said hastily.

"Yes?" Virginia's eyes avoided his. Her lips were trembling, he thought. "I've had them a long time. William—your brother—gave them to me when I was just sixteen."

"I wonder," said Daniel, looking up at the old church, "how long ago they planted that English ivy! There's a perfect mantle of it, isn't there?"

"Grandfather says the old rector planted

it—the one who married grandfather and grandmother in this very church.”

“I suppose he did as much for my grandparents,” said Daniel. “I wonder if they gave him a good fee!”

“Oh, you lawyer!” cried Virginia, and laughed happily.

But Daniel continued to look at the ivy. He had seen her face.

“She still loves William,” he thought bitterly.

Virginia, hiding her confusion, began to ascend the old stone steps.

“Why, there’s your father!” she exclaimed suddenly. “I didn’t know that he often came this way.”

Daniel, who was very pale again, looked around.

“He counted on walking down with me, I fancy,” he remarked quietly, aware of the thunder-storm in Mr. Carter’s face.

Virginia saw it, too, and made haste.

“I’m going in now. Good-by, Daniel, and remember—about that next speech.”

He watched her as she went into the old church, stopping at the door to wave a greeting to his father. Framed thus, she made a picture that he kept in his mind all that day and many days thereafter.



“SHE’S GOT ON THE
FETCHINGEST COSTUME—
FIVE YARDS OF CHIFFON AND
FIFTEEN POUNDS OF CRYSTAL
SPANGLES. IT’S BEAUTY, CLAS-
SIC BEAUTY, ON THE SCREEN!”

Mr. Carter came up, a little out of breath and very red.

"Going my way, father?"

"I suppose I am!"

Mr. Carter slowed his steps to suit his lame son's gait. He was moody, and he had his morning paper done up like a club in his hand. He slashed viciously at the church snowball as they reached it.

"My Lord, to think of that lovely girl—and what I've got for a daughter-in-law!" he growled.

Daniel, who understood the process of his father's mind without asking any questions, said nothing.

"I've got a nickette-show, a ballet-dancer, a runaway-with-a-gambler daughter-in-law, that's what I've got!"

They had reached the street now, and Daniel checked him.

"Hush, father!" the young man said gently. "Some one will hear you."

"Hear me?" bawled Mr. Carter. "Hear me? Drat it! D'you suppose the whole town doesn't know? I met Dr. Barbour when I came out of the house just now. He says the Bulls, those new people at the corner of Hill Street, brought her home last night at one o'clock—I mean this morning—in a motor. What d'you suppose they'll say?"

"Perhaps they've got some sense and won't say anything," suggested Daniel, thinking of the prayer-book and Virginia's face.

"They told Barbour, and he'll tell every one—and it isn't twelve hours old."

"We can't do anything, father. Give the girl a chance. William says it was an accident."

"An accident? And your mother saw her flirting with Corwin in the morning!" Mr. Carter could not restrain his ire. "I tell you, Dan, I wouldn't mind so much if William wasn't behaving like a lummo. He won't get a divorce. He told me so this morning."

"Good Heavens, why should he? It isn't as bad as that. She's only a wild girl, and she hates our ways. Why shouldn't she? We've been finding fault with her from the beginning. I don't see why you spoke of a divorce to William."

"Why?" Mr. Carter set his teeth. Then, as they got to the corner, he spoke his mind. "I want him to get a divorce, behave like a gentleman, and marry Virginia Denbigh—if she'll have him."

"I'm sure Virginia wouldn't have him, if he got a divorce to ask her," said Daniel quietly. "She's not that kind of a woman."

"She's in love with him," replied Mr. Carter; "but I don't care for that, either, if I can make the fool shake off this—this wildcat!"

Daniel, who had reached Judge Jessup's door, smiled.

"I'm really sorry for the wildcat," he said quietly. "She's alone, and she hasn't a friend—unless you count Leigh."

"Leigh's a ninny!" Mr. Carter retorted, and went on, still storming, to his office.

But by twelve o'clock he had worked some of his temper off. The process of cooling down began and ended, too, in sympathy for William. After all, it was hardest on William. He had been a donkey, but he had—in common with the other Carters—a natural horror of notoriety for his women-folks.

Divorce and scandal? Mr. Carter, thinking hard, could not recall a single case in his own family. Of course Uncle Duff Carter had quarreled with his wife, but it was about a back lot that adjoined their place. He wanted to sow it to oats for his horses, and his wife wanted to keep it for a private burial-ground for the family. There hadn't been the least bit of scandal about that quarrel, and it was made up before his uncle died. He was buried, by the way, in that same back lot, with a monument of Florentine marble. His widow had her own way!

As for a runaway wife, or any kind of a wife who wasn't what Mr. Carter called "a lady," there was no record of it. William, his own eldest son and the pride of his heart, seemed about to make the first break in a long line. It must distress William as much as it did his father.

Mr. Carter began to feel the greatest compunction about his son. The boy had behaved like a donkey, but there was no use in crying over spilt milk. The only way was to help him set it right. Of course, if the talk got no farther, and William chose to forgive her and could keep her in hand, there was nothing to be done about it.

As Mr. Carter's rage against Fanchon began to cool, he saw the advantage of suppressing the scandal and making her behave. He had no very clear idea of how this should be done, except his firm belief that any sensible man could prevent such doings in his own household. He belonged,

too, to a type of manhood that has long ago decided on the simplest method to avenge an insult to his family. He couldn't recall an ancestor who under such provocation would fail to shoot his man. Times had changed now, but Mr. Carter felt an intense desire to annihilate that brute, Corwin.

He had no intention of mentioning this to William. The cooling off process had reached the stage of common sense; but he felt that he must talk things over with his son. He had experience of life, if he had no experience with a recalcitrant wife, and he wanted to suggest some kind of restraint for his daughter-in-law. It seemed to him a perfectly practical thing—because he had never tried it. A moral strait-jacket for Fanchon appealed to his mind, at the moment, more strongly than any other idea in life.

He got through the morning's work, lunched alone, and then waited until three o'clock. At that time he could endure it no longer. He had caught his two girl stenographers whispering, and he had seen the office-boy watching the inn opposite, where Corwin had stayed the day before. The office-boy brought Mr. Carter's resolution to a head. He closed his desk sharply, snatched up his hat, and started for William's office.

The office was situated on the top floor of the Payson Building. William was the buyer and traveling agent of Mr. Payson's chain of department-stores. There was only a modest branch store in the home town, but in larger cities there were towering beehives bearing the name of Payson.

William had traveled abroad for these stores, and now, in his private office here, he was still directing the foreign correspondence of the firm. It was a position of great responsibility, and it carried a handsome salary and perquisites. Mr. Carter was proud of his son's advance and proud of his ability to keep up with it. It was his pride in him that made this unfortunate marriage such a bitter disappointment.

He passed through the crowded shop, glancing at the long aisles of merchandise and noting the rugs—some of them brought from Turkey by William, others imported by his advice to be sent to the larger markets in the North. At the elevator Mr. Carter encountered Mr. Payson—the rich man who had paid for the singers at the concert where Fanchon had made herself notorious.

"I'm going up to see my son a moment," said Mr. Carter, as they shook hands.

Payson nodded, but he did not repeat his commendation of William. Instead, he looked rather odd and spoke about the weather.

"Fine for the crops," he said; "but we need more rain."

Mr. Carter assented. He felt uneasy. There was something odd in Payson's manner. The magnate got off at the second floor, and the elevator continued its ascent. At the top Mr. Carter got out and hurried to his son's door. As no one answered his knock, he opened it and went in.

It was a good-sized office, furnished in accordance with Mr. Payson's ideas of business—that is, in the latest and most solid fashion. On a table in the center of the room stood a bottle and a glass, and William Carter was stretched in a chair beside it, lying half on the table, his head down, sound asleep.

Mr. Carter stood aghast. He could see the haggard profile and the dark rings under the closed eyes. Worn out with his heart-breaking night vigil, William had fallen asleep; but his father felt that he was looking on the wreck of his son's life, that William, in his misery, had sought oblivion in the old and time-honored way.

XIV

LEIGH CARTER had attained the dignity of his eighteenth birthday a few days before the arrival of his brother's bride. He had done fairly well at the high school, and was preparing now, during vacation, for a preliminary examination for the university which had educated the male Carters for generations.

Leigh had some mental gifts and a taste for poetry, which seemed to indicate a literary career, and his fond mother regarded him as a budding genius. There was a wide gap in age between the two younger and the two older Carters, occasioned by the death of three intervening children, and Mrs. Carter's affections had always centered on her baby boy, as she still called Leigh—to his great indignation. Her pride had been in William, her sympathy for poor Dan, but her doting fondness was for Leigh.

Mr. Carter did not approve of it. He had warned her more than once that she couldn't bring up anything but an incubator chicken in that way and make a success of it.

Leigh wasn't exactly a success. The latent manhood in him had scarcely stirred. He was a tall, lanky youth with a handsome, boyish face and the eyes of a girl. He had been a dreamer, too, and had spent much

like eyes, and her caressing voice, captured his youthful fancy. He could understand why William loved her, and he became at once her slave and worshiper. Then, when he saw the attitude of the family revealed



UNKNOWN TO MRS. CARTER, HER SON WAS ABOUT TO ACT A MAN'S GREAT PART, TO AVENGE THE HONOR OF THE FAMILY.

in pitiless criticism, he became her still more devoted champion. Fanchon saw it, and she coaxed the boy into still deeper infatuation.

It was her triumph to secure at least one ally in a hostile family, and she used him as a buffer. She always had a kind word for Leigh, a soft pat of the hand, an errand which she conferred as a favor. Leigh, immersed in romantic visions, saw her as the loveliest and most persecuted of beings, and he was ready to give battle to the entire family in her behalf. As Emily expressed it, he would have made himself into Sir Walter Raleigh's cloak for Fanchon to tread upon.

The storm that had followed upon her disappearance on horseback had beaten upon Leigh's nerves. He had lashed himself into a dumb fury in the solitude of his room because his father and mother dared to doubt his paragon, and William, her husband, merely sat and waited for her to come back. William's supineness was the last straw. Leigh had been in a frenzy when Fanchon finally returned, and the meeting on the stairs and her soft kiss of gratitude had gone to his head. He had refused to join a game of baseball that afternoon because he wanted to go home and complete a poem to his sister-in-law.

time in reading romances from the news-stands; but he was a good boy, he had cultivated no vices, and "milk-sop" was the worst charge that other youths of his set could make against him.

He had reached the impressionable age without falling deeply in love, and his mind and heart happened to be in a peculiarly receptive state when Fanchon suddenly burst upon his vision. Her beauty, the subtle charm and mystery of those fawn-

Fanchon had sent him on an errand to the nearest chemist. She had given him a prescription for some headache powders, she said, and Leigh did not know that he was returning with a peculiarly effective preparation of "bloom" that she usually applied at night. He carried the package with something of the air and feeling with which *Sir Lancelot* might have worn the colors of *Elaine*.

It happened that his way led him past a corner of the main street, where Mr. Bernstein had just made special arrangements for showing Rosamond Silvertree's feature pictures at the little local theater. Mr. Bernstein himself, in a new plaid suit with a diamond scarf-pin, was viewing a poster of Rosamond in the effective, if rather startling, costume of "A Belle from Borneo." He had encountered Leigh on one or two previous occasions, and knew him to be the youngest son of Johnson Carter. As the boy approached, looking a little pale from his night's vigil, Mr. Bernstein eyed him shrewdly.

"Looks like a regular moon-calf," he thought; "but I guess he's got gumption enough to take a warnin' to the rest of 'em. Hello, young man!" he called out. "Been in to see this picture? Greatest picture on the screen! There's a matinee to-day and two showings to-night."

Leigh shook his head, stopping to gaze in some amazement at the highly colored portrait of the fair Rosamond.

"Gee!" he remarked. "She's fat!"

"Fat?" Mr. Bernstein blew his cheeks out and stared at him with a kindling eye. "Fat, boy? Why, she's superb! That's Rosamond Silvertree, the most beautiful star on the screen!"

Leigh giggled. He giggled like a girl, a faint pink color coming into his beardless cheeks, and his girlish eyes dancing.

"How much do you suppose she weighs?" he asked gleefully. "Looks to me like four hundred pounds—and some spangles!"

"Miss Silvertree's a lady, young man!" retorted Mr. Bernstein reprovingly. "She's got one of the finest figures I ever saw. Spangles? I want you to know that there's one scene where she's got on the fetchingest costume—five yards of chiffon and fifteen pounds of crystal spangles! It's beauty, classic beauty, on the screen."

Leigh suppressed a giggle this time, and only smiled inanely, edging away.

"Looks kinder foolish," Mr. Bernstein reflected, but he laid a detaining hand on Leigh's arm. "See here, you're Leigh Carter, ain't you?"

Leigh nodded. He half expected an offer for the screen, and he lingered, coloring like a girl.

"Then I guess I can say a word to you—confidential, you understand?" Mr. Bernstein winked slowly. "Entirely confidential—between gentlemen, see?" he added with a stroke of inspiration.

Leigh, flattered in spite of himself, nodded. Mr. Bernstein linked an arm in his.

"Step this way," he said casually. "Don't want to attract attention. Now, Mr. Carter—" He paused, allowing the formal address to sink in. It did. Leigh straightened up. "There's a fellow over at the inn named Corwin. Heard of him?"

Leigh's color deepened.

"I think so," he said stiffly.

Mr. Bernstein nodded.

"He's Caraffi's manager. Caraffi's up at the Hot Springs, taking baths to reduce his flesh, or to make his hair grow, and Corwin's killing time down here. Now I ain't meaning any offense. I'm speaking as a friend, you understand? This man, Corwin, he ain't a gentleman. He's a sport an' a gambler an' a loafer. He ain't any nearer being a gentleman than that there lamp-post's near being a brindled cow. He gets full, too, and when he does he talks, see?"

Leigh, beginning to suspect the drift of the talk, was becoming furious.

"I take no interest in Mr. Corwin," he said sharply. "If that's all you've got to say, Mr. Bernstein—"

"Hold on!" said Mr. Bernstein impatiently. "I've got to tell one of your family—for the sake of the lady. If you want to protect your sister-in-law from scandal, Mr. Leigh Carter, you'd better listen. I ain't believing the talk myself, but it ain't my business. If it was, I'd lam the feller good an' plenty!"

Leigh stared at him. He did not want to listen, but he was boy enough to want to hear. He breathed rather short.

"I don't know what you mean, Mr. Bernstein," he cried excitedly. "I won't hear talk of my sister-in-law!"

"Say!" Bernstein tapped his shoulder with a fat forefinger. "Ain't it better for you Carters to hear it than the whole town? I ask you that! Ain't it up to you Carters to shut his mouth?"

Leigh faltered, then he set his young teeth hard and flung his head back.

"What does he dare to say about Mrs. William Carter?" he demanded fiercely.

"I ain't telling you all he says," Mr. Bernstein replied meaningly. "I ain't soiling my mouth with it—he's a bad one! But he's saying now—to-day—that she started to run away with him yesterday, and then got scared an' come back at one o'clock in the mornin'—"

"That's a lie!" cried Leigh. "A black lie! Where is he?"

"Shucks!" said Mr. Bernstein. "You're a boy. Don't you go lookin' for him. You tell your father, Leigh Carter. He had oughter know it, he—say!"

Leigh had torn himself away and dashed off at a pace that left Mr. Bernstein gaping.

"Well, I'm darned!" he exclaimed. Then he relaxed, and stood looking after Leigh with something like satisfaction. "I guess he'll tell 'em. They wouldn't listen to me, and that Corwin—something oughter be done to him. He ain't no gentleman!"

Mr. Bernstein walked slowly and thoughtfully back to the "Belle from Borneo" poster. He felt that he had done his duty. He bore no ill-will to little Fanchon la Fare, and he hated Corwin.

Leigh, meanwhile, turned off the main street into the quiet lane behind the church and stopped to think. He stopped, panting, on the very step where Virginia had stood talking with Dan. His hot young blood was beating in his head with a noise like a sledge-hammer. Fury choked him. He remembered his own hours of anguished suspense last night, Fanchon's return after her accident, and her light kiss on his cheek. Her knight had received his accolade; he would not fail her!

Sitting under the old tree where the scarlet-headed woodpecker had bored a neat hole, Leigh made up his mind. Bernstein had told the truth about Corwin—that he knew. He couldn't doubt Bernstein. The little man's earnestness had been apparent.

Corwin must be dealt with. Leigh Carter would deal with him, too, at once. He was no child to run to his father. Besides, his father didn't like Fanchon. Lately he had thought his father an unjust man.

As for William—Leigh remembered William's supine waiting last night. Leigh did not mean to wait now. He would carry out the thing he had in mind.

He had read once of a man like Corwin

slandering a noble lady. The hero—Leigh's favorite hero, by the way—had seized a horse-pistol, ridden fifty miles on a mustang, confronted the villain, held his pistol to his head, and forced him to write and sign a retraction that made the lady's character shine out as clear as noonday. Getting his breath on the old stone step of the church where he had been baptized, Leigh made up his mind as swiftly as the mustang had galloped. He took off his hat, wiped the drops of perspiration from his boyish forehead, and, straightening his collar and tie, rose and went straight home.

It happened at the moment that there was no one in the house but Miranda and his mother. As he entered, he heard his mother's voice in the kitchen.

"Miranda, get me those pitted cherries. I'm going to make a pie for dinner. Leigh loves cherry pie!"

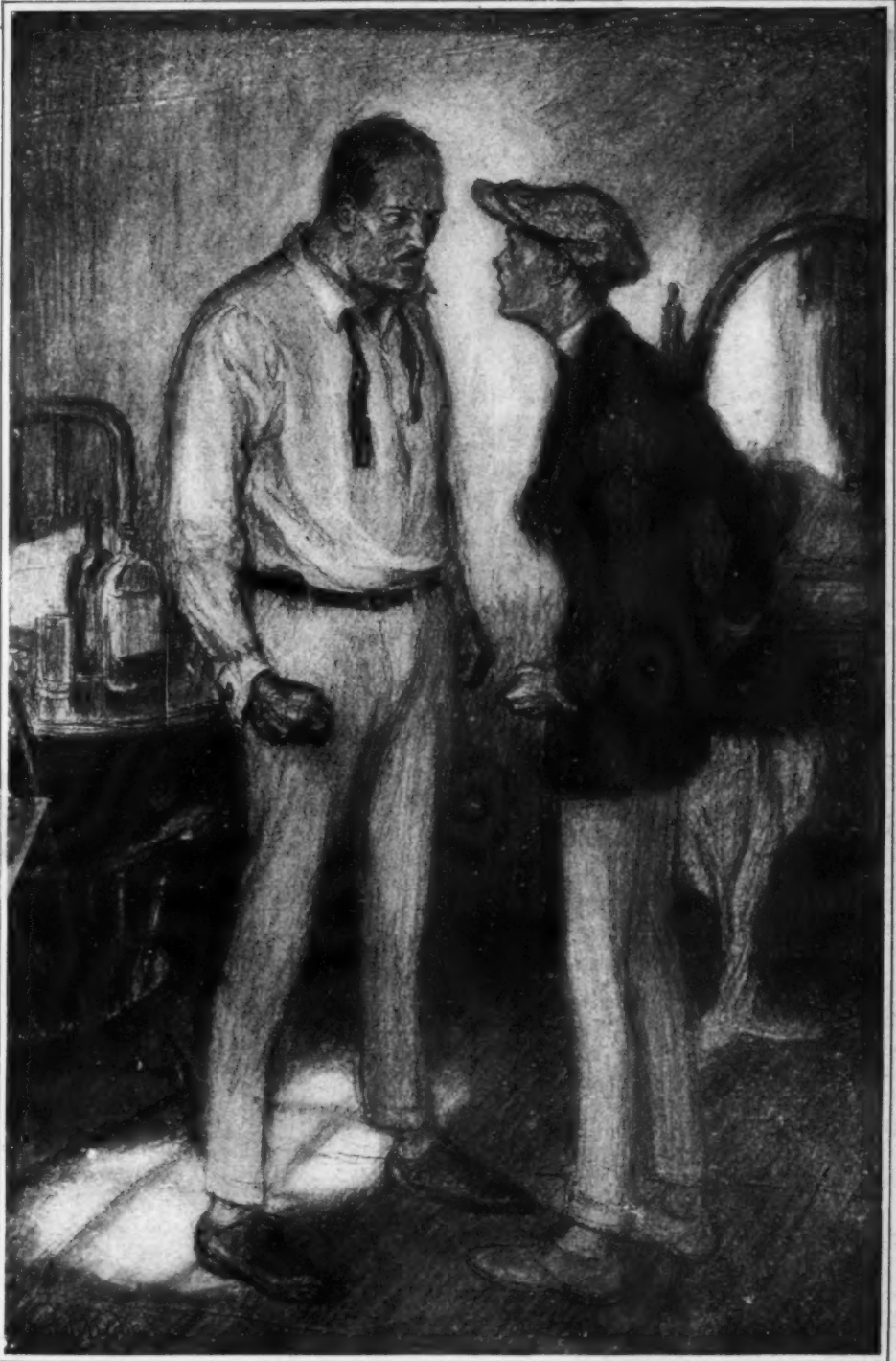
He paused with his hand on the banister, thrilled with that poignant moment. Unknown to Mrs. Carter, her son was about to act a man's great part, to avenge the honor of the family, and she—oh, grotesque thought—she was making cherry pie for him!

But he could not wait even for such thoughts as these. He ran up-stairs and into his father's room. In the upper drawer of the old mahogany high-boy was a pistol. Mr. Carter kept it loaded as a precaution against mythical burglars. Leigh found it, thrust it in his pocket, and walked slowly down the hall.

Fanchon's door was open. She had gone out, but she had left the room in sweet confusion. He caught sight of the trailing silk and chiffon of her tea-gown—one of the family amazements—lying across the bed. On a chair hung her riding-jacket, left to dry. There was an elusive fragrance of violets, the same fragrance that always hung about her person. Evidently she had forgotten her headache, or she had gone out to walk it off.

Very reverently Leigh laid the chemist's package on a chair near the door. Then he saw a small glove lying on the floor. He picked it up, kissed it solemnly, and thrust it into his pocket. The illusion was complete—he bore his lady's glove.

Aristide Corwin was alone in his room at the inn. It happened that his open windows commanded a clear view of Mr. Carter's office opposite, and of the sign over the



"YFS, A DUEL WITH ME!" LEIGH TREMBLED WITH PASSION. "YOU'VE GOT TO FIGHT—I'LL SEND MY SECONDS. YOU'RE A COWARD, SIR, AND A LIAR!"

door—"Johnson Carter, Insurance and Loans." Corwin had been staring at it moodily. He hated it for some reason.

Not that he thought much of the Carters. His business was with Fanchon, not with William Carter. But he hated that office, and he hated the whole tribe, at the moment, because Fanchon had outwitted him. She had made a fool of him. He had had his revenge, he was making the town ring with his talk, but he was not even with her yet—not yet! His eyes kindled fiercely at the thought of her. He had been drinking. Two bottles still stood on his table, and his glass was full.

He was a man who had been handsome in his first youth, but his face had coarsened and his hard eyes lowered. He rose, stripped off his coat, and sat down again in his shirt-sleeves, his collar unbuttoned from his big throat. He was hot, but he kept on drinking. It was late now, near supper-time, and there came a knock at his door.

"Come in!" he said harshly.

The door opened, and Leigh Carter entered. Corwin did not know him, he did not remember having seen him with Fanchon, but he saw a slender boy of seventeen or eighteen, well-dressed and deathly pale, with the eyes of a girl.

"What you want, kid?" he demanded sharply, setting down his glass.

Leigh walked straight across the room to the table and stood looking down at him, an image of young scorn and wrath.

"I'm Leigh Carter," he said, breathing quickly. "I've heard the infamous story you're telling about a lady—my sister-in-law, Mrs. William Carter—a story that she ran away with you last night. I'm here to demand the truth. Did you—did you dare to tell such a story here?"

Corwin's first stare of surprise gave way to a slow, insulting grin. He measured Leigh from head to foot. Then he laughed.

"Yes," he replied truculently, "I did say that—and a damned sight more, Mr. Leigh Carter—kid! And it's every bit true!"

Leigh's hands shook as he grasped the edge of the table.

"You'll take that back, Mr. Corwin," he said in a low voice, leaning forward and looking at the man opposite.

Corwin laughed, tilting his chair and putting his feet on the table. His very nonchalance stung the boy opposite with a fresh sense of insult.

"Will I?" he mocked. "Who's going to make me do it?"

Leigh, white with passion now, flashed scorn upon him.

"I will! You can't say things like that about my brother's wife."

Corwin stared at him, still laughing; then he lowered his feet to the floor and rose. Standing, he overtopped the slender Carter boy by half a head.

"Your brother's wife, eh?" he sneered.

"Look here, child, you go home and eat your supper. Don't you get worked up over Fanchon. I've known the lady quite a spell. If I whistled"—Mr. Corwin threw his head back and walked across the room toward Leigh, flushed with liquor, truculent, intolerable—"if I whistled, she'd run off with me to-morrow. I don't because"—he came closer to Leigh now, laughing and sneering, insult in every line of his coarse, flushed face—"because I don't want her!"

Leigh swung around and faced him, shaking with rage.

"You lie!" he cried hoarsely.

Corwin only laughed boisterously.

"You fool kid, you don't know the lady. She—"

He leaned over, thrust his face close to Leigh's, and whispered. The boy sprang back.

"Stop!" he almost shrieked. "I'll fight you! I'm a Carter, and I challenge you to fight a duel!"

The man laughed loudly again.

"A duel with you? You kid!"

"Yes, with me!" Leigh trembled with passion. "You've got to fight—I'll send my seconds. You're a coward, sir, and a liar!"

Corwin caught him suddenly by the shoulder.

"See here, you Carter boy!" said he. "You've called me a liar twice to-day. I'm not a liar—I'll show you! Fight duels for that woman? Bah! I don't fight kids—I box their ears!"

He sneered and slapped Leigh's face. The boy, with a cry of passion and shame, wrenched himself free, snatched the pistol from his pocket, and fired pointblank.

The noise of the report rang in his own ears with a deafening crash, and there was a little whiff of smoke. Leigh reeled back, his horrified eyes fixed on the floor.

Corwin had crumpled up like a sack of meal and lay there in a heap, stone dead.

(To be continued in the December number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)